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CURRENT COMMENT.

THE first prize in the great All-Fools' Day free-for-all, was this year awarded by immediate and uproarious acclamation to the Assembly at Albany for their action in disfranchising and unseating the Socialist party in New York State. The public was so impressed with their magnificent effort that in addition to the regular prize awarded by the judges, which is a substantial one, it is thought probable that a large monument of jackasses' skulls will be erected by popular subscription on a suitable site near the State House, to commemorate the occasion. This paper will contribute to the project according to its slender means, and cordially recommends it to its friends.

THE second prize went to President Wilson for his inimitable animadversion upon the relations between the Soviet Government of Russia and "the civilized world." This is contained in his note to the Allied Powers, dealing with the Turkish question:

This Government is convinced that no arrangement that is now made concerning the government and control of Constantinople and the straits can have any elements of permanency unless the vital interests of Russia in those problems are carefully provided for and protected, and unless it is understood that Russia, when it has a Government recognized by the civilized world, may assert its right to be heard in regard to the decisions now made.

Isn't that just too neat for anything? Still, it was a close shave whether it should get the second prize over the roaring farce staged by the Allied Powers and Holland, which has for its motive the trial of the Kaiser. The curtain was rung down on this creditable effort, 31 March, and it would have taken the prize if the last act had kept up the interest. It was supposed that Holland, the clown or Pantaloon of the farce, would, in the last act, everlastingly confound and embarrass the other actors by delivering over the Kaiser as requested. The essential unities of good comedy required this, and as they were violated, the farce was voted a failure.

THE third prize had to be divided between General Wood and Brother Hoover. The General contributed the following, shaking it out of his repertoire upon a large rural audience at Canton, Ohio, with the convincing grace of Dr. Dulcamara in the "Elisir d'Amore":

I also recall that a short time before we entered that war

McKinley said to me: 'We may be forced into war, but not until I am convinced that God and man approve the step.' Those words of the lamented President, to my way of thinking, typify the sentiment of the American people toward the horrible thing we call war.

Previous to this, the best that the General had done in the competition was his observations on the tariff: but it was expressly stipulated that on account of the nature of the subject, it should not count. At Lake Linden, Michigan, 29 March, however, he exhibited this gem serene:

Militarism is the cry of the fakers who caused half our deaths in France by blocking training and preparedness. That would be the verdict of those who died untrained in France because these humbugs sent them to their death.

MEANWHILE over at the other tent, Brother Hoover was showing prospective investors that as far as he was concerned, the pea was under the Republican shell, as follows:

If the Republican party, with the independent element of which I am naturally affiliated, adopts a forward looking liberal, constructive platform on the treaty and on our economic issues, and if the party proposes measures for sound business administration of the country, and is neither reactionary nor radical in its approach to our great domestic questions, and is backed by men who undoubtedly assure the consummation of these policies and measures, I will give it my entire support.

As Artemus Ward remarked with engaging frankness, we skurcely know what those air. But no matter, it was not meant that we should; and no one begrudges Brother Hoover his well-earned share of the prize-money. Our fine old friend William Allen White is unfortunately out of the running. He comes along too late—four days late—with his proposition to deport Governor Smith, Governor Edwards and William Barnes, for being constructively agin the Eighteenth Amendment. Deport them!—but where to? If he sent them to Russia, as he thinks might have been justifiable, "along with Berkman and Goldman," they would be in great danger of having a good time when they got there; which would never do. Russia, from the standpoint of the scandalous and ungodly, is an increasingly attractive place these days; and it would be highly unbecoming on the part of Mr. White, if not absolutely immoral, to consign anybody to any place where he could by any possibility or peradventure have a good time. The traditions of Kansas stand against it like a mountain of flint. Mr. White must have meant his remarks for the competition; they belong nowhere else. Perhaps, however, he had in mind deporting them to Kansas, there to improve and moralize them by the uplifting contemplation of the motor-car, the movie, and the land-deal; and yet one misses the recommendation to Divine mercy which always accompanies a capital sentence, so perhaps one should not impute such inflexible severity to Mr. White, even by conjecture.

THE Reverend Dr. Straton also comes under the wire two or three days too late. Edifying his congregation with the account of a Parkhurstian tour which he made among various night-resorts in New York, he says:

I do not believe it is an exaggeration to say there were more young men and women congested in the few places of sinful amusement which we visited on one Saturday night, than attended all the Protestant churches of Manhattan Island combined, the following Sunday morning.

Who would have thought it? Well, the contest this year was admirable, fully up to standard in respect of both the number of entries and the quality of entertainment furnished by their performance.

THE symposium on the high cost of living continues to hold daily sessions, and no one who has anything to say on the subject need lack an audience. During the war, American production and exportation of beef and grain were artificially stimulated in order that our Allies might be fed while they fought. The end of the conflict brought an inevitable decline in these exports; and as long ago as last summer the Department of Agriculture began to urge the increase of domestic consumption as the only means of preventing a ruinous state of affairs, in the cattle industry in particular. As long as this vigorous propaganda is kept up, there can be no excuse for undereating on the part of any of our citizens—unless it be found in the fact that, between 1 March, 1919, and 1 March, 1920, when exports were falling off day by day, food prices advanced 24½ per cent.

THESE last figures, supplied by the Bureau of Labour Statistics, should lay the fear felt by certain officials in the Department of Agriculture that over-production and under-exportation will bring us eventually into an era of low prices and hard times. Such an era seems of course the natural successor to that period of "extravagance and reckless buying" with which the Federal Reserve Board is still so much concerned. The Board does not *fear* that this latter period is coming to an end; it *hopes* so. And when one asks how the hope is to be realized, the answer is that "relief from high prices will not be completely obtained until present stocks are absorbed in practically all lines." In other words, the way to satisfy both the Department of Agriculture and the Federal Reserve Board is to rush around the corner and buy everything the shops have to offer; this, says the Department, will stall off the day of low prices and ruined industries; this—if one prefers the Board's prescription—will reduce the stock of commodities and thereby reduce their prices! . . . How quickly all the guesses could be reduced to zero if only these Federal agencies were required to report to each other, instead of to the persecuted public.

THE railwaymen are asking for wage-increases aggregating something more than a billion dollars a year; and it is a hundred to one the modest request will not be granted. As long as the economic system affords no approach to justice in either production or distribution, the only way that labour can get what it wants is by withholding what it has; that is to say, by striking. And for the present the railwaymen cannot strike without resorting to downright lawlessness. The Lever Fuel and Food Control Act takes care of this by prohibiting combinations and conspiracies "to restrict the distribution of any necessities." As long as this law remains in force, the Attorney-General of the United States can dispose of a railway-strike quite as easily as he disposed of the coal-strike last fall. But the Lever Act is a war-measure, destined to lapse when the Senate makes peace with Germany. In that far-off, divine event the railwaymen will again have the right to make good their monopoly-control of labour; unless in the meantime the Government has provided the operators with that most effective of weapons against the strike—the mechanism of military mobilization. American labour has never concerned itself very deeply with the matter of universal military training, although it stands to reason that such training, in whatever guise it may come, is no more than a prelude to the installation of active and reserve army lists and all the rest of the machinery for getting unruly workers out of their overalls and into their uniforms and back on the job in a hurry. The wage-committees of the Brotherhoods have such important interests at stake here that they would do well to detail a couple of dozen men to keep watch

over Representative Kahn. Mr. Kahn has already announced that, with a majority of the House Military Affairs Committee behind him, he intends to bring another universal training bill into Congress before the end of the present session.

SINCE the demonstration of the injunctive process on a national scale during the coal strike, the temptation to stop strikes in the same way has apparently been too great for our judges. Hardly a week passes but what one or another tries his hand at it. Out in San Francisco, Judge Van Fleet some time ago issued an injunction restraining strikers from picketing the Moore Shipbuilding Company. The injunction affected some twenty-five unions and prohibited the union men from going near the property of the company, talking with any of the men at work, or in any other way interfering with the business of the company. A little over a week ago the Supreme Court of Massachusetts ordered a permanent injunction against the photo-engravers' local and international unions restraining them from interfering with the business of Wright and Company and the Folsom Engraving Company. The Court declared that it was a primary right of the plaintiffs at all times to hire in the open market such workmen as they chose, "unhampered by the interference of the union acting as a body through the instrumentality of a strike, boycott or blacklist." From St. Louis comes a report that the United States District Judge issued an injunction forbidding the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers to call or foster strikes. A more recent case is reported from Pittsburgh, Kansas, where Judge A. J. Curran has issued an order against Alexander Howatt, president of District Fourteen United Mine Workers, all the other district officials, and all persons under their instruction, restraining them from interfering with the production of coal in Crawford and Cherokee counties where a strike was to be called on 12 April. It seems to an outsider that all this is more or less crowding the mourners.

NOR since the co-operative movement of the 'eighties, which was stimulated by the Knights of Labour, have the industrial workers of the country been so ready for co-operative experiments as they are at present. Not only are Consumers' Co-operative Societies on the Rochdale plan growing in the industrial communities, but many co-operative efforts of a somewhat different type are being made all over the country. Two developments deserve especial attention. In several cases workers on strike have organized co-operative workshops either as a means of winning their demands or in order not to return to their former employers after the strike had been lost. The cases reported are of cigar-makers, tailors, and similar small-scale industries in which handwork and skill are still important. Of greater significance, however, is the movement of the railroad workers to reduce the cost of living by eliminating the middleman. The United Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees and Shop Labourers purchased some time ago two underwear-factories at Ypsilanti, Michigan, a glove-factory at Williamston, Michigan, and a New York factory which makes the tubing used in gloves. Now the same Brotherhood announces the purchase of the canvas-glove factory of Bacon Brothers at Toledo, Ohio, and also its plan to enlarge the factory to permit the manufacture of overalls. The Brotherhood also plans to take over some factories manufacturing shoes and men's suits.

THE methods of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees differ from the Rochdale plan of co-operation in that all products will be sold to members of the Railroad Brotherhood only, and at cost. According to the announcements the Brotherhood expects to effect a saving for its members of thirty-five to sixty per cent over prevailing retail prices. Experienced co-operators will probably be sceptical of such sporadic efforts, espe-

cially since these ignore the fundamental principles of Rochdale co-operation. The history of American co-operation would suggest that more careful and scientific planning is desirable if lasting results are to be achieved. There is, however, one element in the situation which justifies greater hopefulness. Never before were the unions so well organized and so well equipped with funds for such enterprises; and what is perhaps more important, never before was there such a clear consciousness of the aim to be achieved, and such a spirit of determination to achieve it. As this paper has already pointed out, co-operation is the really radical movement at present in this country, and Mr. Palmer should disengage himself from the promotion of scares about a bogus radicalism at least long enough to notice what it is about.

THE loss of human life from preventable accidents still remains a serious problem. At the first annual Massachusetts Accident Prevention Congress held a few weeks ago, Mr. Price, general manager of the National Safety Council, cited some recent statistics on the subject which are of great interest. Mr. Price pointed out that during the nineteen months of the war (during which 47,949 American soldiers were killed or died from wounds received in battle), 126,000 men, women and children were killed in the United States, 35,000 in industry and 91,000 outside of industry. Of those killed outside of industry, 25,000 were children. In the words of the speaker, "during those nineteen months our boys were fighting on the other side of the water, there were two hundred and twenty people killed in this country every twenty-four hours, and it would take a ditch forty-eight miles long and as wide as the ordinary sidewalk to hold the bodies of those one hundred and twenty-six thousand men, women and children." Mr. Price also maintained that three-fourths of all deaths and serious injuries in American industry could be eliminated if the manufacturers so desired.

EVERY now and then there is a strike in Italy which shows what the docile labourer is capable of, once he is thoroughly disillusioned about political action and collective bargaining. Just the other day, for instance, the three thousand employees of the Miani Silvestri steel foundries in Naples decided to stop work. But instead of "walking out," they locked the factory gates from the inside, and appointed a committee to take control of the plant. "Some time later, troops surrounded the factory and, by the use of machine guns, forced the workmen to surrender." And for all one knows, that was the end of it. But not so in the region of Turin, where resides Signor Mazzoni, mill-owner and sworn enemy of collective bargaining. It is recorded that the striking workers in the Mazzoni mills, having been denied an audience with the owner, appealed their case to the arbitration-council in Turin. Under the law the decisions of the council are purely advisory; and in this case Signor Mazzoni did not feel obliged either to plead his case, or to abide by the verdict, which happened to be favourable to the operatives. Thereupon the workers took over the mills and began to run them on the co-operative plan; and the Government, instead of bringing up artillery, decided to take possession of the property. Apparently Italian workers are developing a new technique of the strike. Hitherto the term "strike" has been applied only to large-scale withdrawals of the labour-factor of production. This stops the whole process, and the consuming public blames the strikers. The Italians show an inclination to go at it differently; they defenestrate the manager, expropriate the owners, and go on producing the goods just the same. Thereupon the public has to choose between the enjoyment of goods unrighteously produced and the protection of interests legitimately, or rather, lawfully, acquired. The offer of goods under these circumstances certainly puts an enormous strain upon the public conscience. Although it may be possible and even comparatively easy to

operate a factory which pays no tolls to ownership, one is bound to confess that it is very wrong to do so—at present.

A POWERFUL alliance of churches, we are told, is planning to devote \$10,000,000 and a good deal of energy to fighting radicalism among our alien population. The boards of the various church-organizations are said to be in complete agreement that the Red menace is due to the alien immigrant, and their object is to give him better opportunity to assimilate American ideas and ideals. But what kind of American ideas and ideals?—the Palmer variety, for instance? Alien immigrants have already suffered enlightenment enough from plentiful examples of Palmerism. Is it the landlord-milkman variety? But the newcomer sees enough of that kind every day he lives; there is no need of further indoctrination with this sort of Americanism. Perhaps the alliance of churches hopes to teach him the Declaration-of-Independence kind of American ideas and ideals, which many good people still suppose to have survived the Civil War. But how can they expect to put very convincingly to the immigrant something which everything in his daily life on this side of the water contradicts, a theory which has officially become no more than academic, and which the great church alliance itself might conceivably repudiate if it were attempted in practice?

It would be more thrifty and more effective, one would imagine, for these united churches to begin this sort of Americanization-programme the other way around, with the Palmers, the Burlesons, the Wilsons; with landlords and milkmen; with steel-trust officials and other monopolists and profiteers—that is if it proposes to waste its time on individuals. If individuals are to be Americanized it is only fair to begin with Americans. Americanism, like charity, should begin at home. But the alliance of churches might do something more fundamental; it might try to Americanize our institutions. It might turn over its \$10,000,000 to the Committee of Forty-eight, or use it to back the programme of American labour. It might devote its money and energy to the abolition of privilege from its fundamental place in our existing institutions, and leave the ideas and ideals of natives and immigrants to take care of themselves, as they undoubtedly will anyhow.

THE poor old mandate over Armenia seems to be about as popular among the great Powers as a wet dog in a parlour. The Allies tried to palm it off on the United States, but it fell foul of our newly-cut eye-teeth and was rejected. None of the European Powers will have it as a gift, and having made the rounds, it seems now in a way to go to the ash-can; that is, it has been offered to the League of Nations by the Supreme Council. Cilicia, mind, is to be left under a French protectorate. Now, take a resource-map of all the rest of Armenian territory and figure how much in dollars and cents that mandate would be worth for exploitation-purposes, and a clear light falls on the notable reluctance of the Christian Powers toward their downtrodden brethren. A mandate redeemable in rugs and cigarettes has perhaps an æsthetic value, but commercially it is not attractive. The overhead is too high.

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TOPICS OF THE DAY.

ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS.

PRESIDENT WILSON, early in the war, did one of the most just and useful things, probably the most just and useful thing, in his whole career, when he made his famous differentiation between the German Government and the German people. He pointed out that the character, interests and aims of the German Government were wholly different from those of the German people and directly opposed to them; that the Government actively and incessantly worked against the interests of the people, and meanwhile deluded the people with false notions of patriotism in order to get them to accept and fall in with its nefarious purposes. In putting all this so clearly, the President did an inestimable service to the principles of radicalism. Radicalism had been saying just this about the German Government for years and years; it was saying just this when that same Government was in high favour at Washington, when President Roosevelt and the German Emperor were hobnobbing hand and glove.

President Wilson, however, based his admirable statement upon rather different and much less philosophical grounds than those proposed by radicalism. He based it upon the ground that the German Government was autocratic and irresponsible—one of the most curious assertions, one would say, that Mr. Wilson, in view of his own record, would have the hardihood to make. Radicalism criticized and condemned the German Government; radicals the world over beheld it as inimical to the interests of the German people, not because it was autocratic and irresponsible, not, above all, because it was German, but because it was political. By means of its historical investigations into the origin and nature of the State, of political government in general, radicalism perceived that the State, wherever found and whether autocratic, constitutional or republican, invariably operated against the interests of the people; and that its administration was carried on by what, therefore, could be properly regarded (as Mr. Wilson appeared to regard and encouraged us all to regard the German Administration) as a professional-criminal class. Radicalism saw that the primary interest of political government, wherever found and under whatever mode or form, was in maintaining the economic exploitation of one stratum of society by another. Hence radicalism has long been out of the habit, except for purposes of pure geography, of nationalizing political government; quite as sensible persons, long before the war, had given up the habit of nationalizing atrocities committed by armies. Radicalism sees that the German, English and American Governments are German, English, American, only in the same limited and superficial sense that the atrocities in Belgium, India and the Philippines were German, English, American. Louvain, Amritsar and the "water-cure" were military atrocities; Hell-roaring Jake Smith was not a product of America but of militarism, which is the same the world over. No special indictment of character can properly be held against the German, English or American peoples on account of these, for it is abundantly demonstrable that wherever an army is and under whatever incidental nationality, there of nature and necessity are atrocities. Thus, to the eye of radicalism, the German, English, American Governments are not essentially German, English, American;

they are essentially political. They are not, therefore, properly to be criticized or defended or even considered, according to their geography, but according to their nature and character. No one objects to Asiatic cholera because it is Asiatic, but because it is deadly.

Never to greater profit could this view be tenaciously held and energetically propagated than at the present time. All signs point to an era of misunderstanding and ill feeling between the two peoples who of all on earth have least to quarrel about and most to communicate to a needy world—the English people and ourselves. This misunderstanding is being now most industriously promoted in both countries by those who have lost sight of Mr. Wilson's invaluable just distinction, and are busily identifying the English Government and its aims with the English people and their aims, and the American Government and its aims with the American people and their aims; and there is no telling what misery, distress and error may ensue upon this confusion within the next two years. One section of our press identifies the English Government with the English people as a text for indiscriminate praise, another as a text for indiscriminate blame; and the one is as wrong and contemptible and profoundly dangerous as the other. Talk of the Red Menace!—indeed, the elements that most menace the interests of the American people are, first, the Tory-Federalists and imperialists who day by day release irruptions of adulatory and neurasthenic sycophancy upon England, and, second, those who day by day open upon her the floodgates of their recrimination and invective. They are menacing because both of them alike assume a fixed correspondence in character and purpose between the English Government and the English people; and there is no such correspondence. Meanwhile, like influences in England make the same assumption about our Government and our people; and if such are permitted to have the pre-eminence in both countries, we are likely to see a very pretty quarrel bred by this inveterate and unwarranted confusion.

Probably no one, certainly no radical, would, after the happenings of the last five years, have much of a good word to say for political government, wherever found; any more than President Wilson could find to say for that particular fraction of political government towards which he was endeavouring to arouse all the malignity of which misguided and uninformed human nature is capable. But this is not the point. The point is that in all their consideration of Anglo-American relations, the American people should be clearly aware, and should show themselves clearly aware, that the aims and interests of the English Government are not those of the English people but essentially opposed to them; and that the English people should in their turn, make a similar discrimination. This will be the bond of peace in which a true unity of the spirit can be kept and cultivated to limitless effectiveness. When Mr. Hearst, for example, talks about "England" or "Great Britain," let us clearly understand that he is proceeding upon a monstrous and shocking assumption; and let the English people have the same fixed understanding with regard to Mr. Bottomley's outpourings. When another section of our press spews a turbid spate of sycophancy over some ambassador's sayings or doings, or over some oratory at a Pilgrim's dinner or at a Washington's Birthday celebration in London, let us remember that the interest appealed to is not that of the English people but of political government;

and let the English people take a similar saving precaution in the premises.

If Americans wish to get a composite of the English people, to know what their fundamental tradition is and what their fundamental loyalties are, they need not turn to English history or literature, for they will find it more conveniently in their own. Let them resolutely close their eyes to diplomatic exchanges and official pronouncements, and read Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, Thoreau, Wendell Phillips, Henry George. There is England; there is the fundamental, imperishable tradition of the English people, obstinately held to and continuously pushed forward against every bulwark that political government has raised against it. If the English wish to know the fundamental tradition of the American people, let them look for it in the centuries before the Conquest, in the Peasant's War, in Peterloo, in William Cobbett and in Richard Cobden. Ours is theirs, and theirs is ours; political government is opposed to it here, precisely as it is there. It is the magnificent tradition of economic freedom, the instinct to know that without economic freedom no other freedom is significant or lasting, and that if economic freedom be attained, no other freedom can be withheld.

Economic freedom is that to which political government in both countries, as in all countries, is primarily opposed. Political government in England is having an increasingly hard time with its task, in the face of a high and purposeful economic organization; in the United States it has so far, from purely natural causes, had but little trouble. So much the more, then, should the English people be patient with our imperfect understanding of our tradition; consider the disabilities which political government has put upon us with its inhibiting control of our schools and our press; and assist us in our effort to clear and educate and emancipate ourselves. For our part, it is what Burke calls "the ancient and inbred piety, integrity, good nature and good humour of the English people" that Americans should cleave to, and not the words or works of a Government that is no more essentially English than ours is essentially American. If the distinction that Mr. Wilson drew so precisely be but understood in England and in the United States, then it will be perceived at once that the more diligently political government be slighted and disallowed, and the higher the type of economic organization effected by common effort between the two countries, the sooner will the great common tradition of economic freedom prevail.

CONSPIRACY AND COVENANT.

THE last secret treaty to be heard of is perhaps the most extraordinary of all the discreditable engagements of the gentlemen who have been concerned with the diplomacy of the world. It is charged by M. André Tardieu that the President of the United States agreed secretly with M. Clemenceau that France should occupy the Rhine Provinces indefinitely if the American Senate declined to ratify the peace-treaty. No wonder the newspapers have made little of this statement. Are we to understand that Mr. Wilson presented a treaty to the American Senate for ratification, while he withheld from them any knowledge of a secret understanding entered into with the French Premier which had for its purpose the defeat of the Senate's intention in the event of non-ratification? This is precisely what the charge brought by M. Tar-

diou amounts to. He says there are documents at the French Foreign Office which are in the nature of an agreement for the indefinite occupation by France of the Rhine territory; if so, they require a deal of explaining to avoid the charge of conspiracy against the action of the American Senate, in the event of the defeat of the treaty. The statement made by M. Tardieu is quite clear:

If, owing to non-ratification of the American, British and French protective treaty, France after fifteen years of occupation along the Rhine has no other guarantee of security than the occupation of the left bank of the Rhine, such occupation might be prolonged until other guarantees exist, whether they are obtained through the coming into force of the American, British and French compact or other equivalent guarantees. In a word, no guaranteeing treaties, no evacuation in 1935.

According to M. Tardieu, Articles 428 and 429 have not been read aright; everybody has been labouring under a vast misapprehension as to the true import of these articles. The world generally was under the impression that the guarantees referred to in Article 429 were those to be given by Germany. A paragraph in this same Article says:

If at that date the guarantees against unprovoked aggression by Germany are not considered sufficient by the Allied and Associated Governments the evacuation of the occupying troops may be delayed to the extent regarded as necessary for the purpose of obtaining the required guarantees.

Now we are told that the guarantees referred to in this paragraph are those arranged secretly by Mr. Wilson and M. Clemenceau and that they are tantamount to an indefinite occupation of the Rhine Provinces. M. Tardieu's statement implies that his chief and Mr. Wilson arranged the matter in this wise: in the event of the defeat of the Anglo-American protective treaty by the American Senate, France should be protected by a secret arrangement which will permit her to occupy German territory indefinitely; and in the event of non-ratification of the peace-treaty by the American Senate, France by a secret understanding will be permitted by Great Britain and the United States to occupy the left bank of the Rhine after January 10, 1935. There can be no other interpretation of the statement made by M. Tardieu, and it naturally gives rise to wonder what the Senate will have to say about this proceeding. It is competent also to wonder what the advocates of the treaty will have to say about the European methods of secret diplomacy that have been adopted by the Executive.

There are two or three urgent questions that ought to be asked about this business, and in order to get at them, it is necessary to review certain events which took place before we went into the war. The facts have been suppressed with all possible energy and diligence, and no one would pretend that they have all come out even yet; still there are plenty to be going on with, and such as there are have been thoroughly established.

In the first place France, Russia, Great Britain, Serbia, and Belgium were secretly engaged before the war to act in concert in the event of trouble with Germany and Austria. Military and naval agreements were entered into, in some cases at least eight years before Russia invaded East Prussia and Germany invaded Belgium. We know the history and the terms of most of these understandings. In Sazonov's report to the Tsar in 1912, "England promised to support France on land by sending an expedition of 100,000 to the Belgian border to repel the invasion of France by the German army through Belgium, expected by the French General Staff." That meant that the Germans were to be repelled on the eastern border of Belgium. Fur-

thermore, in the summer of last year Marshal Joffre appeared before the French Parliamentary Committee set up to inquire into the Briey Basin scandal. The committee questioned him as to the original plan of defence; and the Marshal, referring to his note-book, explained the reasons which in 1913 led to a complete change of the Allied plan. He said the violation of Belgian territory was foreseen, and that the French concentration was carried farther northward, in consequence, towards Hirson, a great railway centre on the border of Belgium directly south of Maubeuge. He also stated that all forces were to be engaged simultaneously, adding that a military convention with Great Britain existed, the terms of which were secret; but nevertheless, the aid of six British divisions was counted upon, and also the support of the Belgians. We also know that the Franco-Russian Alliance provided for joint naval and military action, and it is shown in Sazonov's report to the Tsar, 4 August, 1912, that mobilization was to be regarded by each government as a declaration of war. The Russian objective was Constantinople and the control of the Straits; the French objective was the reacquisition of Alsace and Lorraine, and the conquest of the left bank of the Rhine. This paper has already referred, in its issue of 17 March, to the Grey-Cambon-Sazonov agreements of 1912. The arrangements made in the winter of 1916-1917, between France and Russia, with the consent of Great Britain, were completed by M. Isvolsky for Russia and M. Doumergue for France. Russia agreed to the following:

First, Alsace and Lorraine to be restored to France. Second, to be included in French territory all the metallurgic basin of Lorraine and all the coal basin of the Valley of the Sarre. Third, other territories on the left bank of the Rhine which are at present part of the German Empire, to be completely separated from this latter empire and freed from all political and economic dependence on Germany. Fourth, the territories on the left bank of the Rhine not to be included in French territory, to constitute an autonomous and neutral State and to be occupied by French troops as long as Germany shall not have complied with the whole of the conditions in the proposed peace-treaty.

The French Government agreed that Russia should have complete liberty in the settlement of her western frontiers. All these negotiations and agreements received the sanction and consent of Great Britain.

Now, here is the question of primary interest: When M. André Tardieu was High Commissioner to the United States, did he know the provisions of the Franco-Russian secret agreements for the division of German territory? He has assured us that he could not speak of the Wilson-Clemenceau agreement while the Senate deliberations were in progress, but that now the restraint upon him is removed. What would have happened if he had told the American public, or for that matter, the Senate, what the provisions of the Franco-Russian secret agreements were with regard to the Western frontiers of Germany, and the left bank of the Rhine? Did anybody in this country, outside of certain financial circles, know as much about these secret treaties as Sir Edward Carson, for instance, knew about them? It may be remembered that he let the cat out of the bag as to the French objective, the left bank of the Rhine, while the war was in progress. Is it not extraordinary how little America seems to have known, and how much certain European politicians knew, about the objectives of the belligerents? Did we really enter into this war without any knowledge of these secret treaties? Is it believable that none of the French Commissions or British Commissions to this country gave the slightest inkling to Mr. Wilson, or the State Department, of the obliga-

tions of the Allies; obligations we were bound to recognize the moment we took part in the conflict? When we think of Mr. Wilson's speech to the Senate in January, 1916, on "no annexations and no indemnities"—the famous "peace without victory" speech—what sort of answer can we make? When Mr. Wilson laid down the Fourteen Points was he wholly ignorant of the secret treaties of our European Allies, which made the principles of that speech sound like a nonsensical screed of futile generalities? Is it then really possible that the only persons in this country who knew anything about the real objectives of France and Russia were our countrymen who were members of the Franco-American Committee, founded in 1907 by M. Gabriel Hanotaux?

A sensation like the shiver of mortal cold passed over Europe when the terms of the armistice were flagrantly set aside, and the armies of the Allies proceeded to carry out to the letter the provisions of the secret treaties in the occupation of conquered territories. But the proceeding did not seem to affect Americans, probably because we did not understand the import of the treaties which arranged for the division of the spoil. But the explicit statement of M. Tardieu touches American tradition and institutional pride, and may possibly make us aware of the jeopardy in which secret diplomacy places a people. Secret diplomacy has, to use the phrase of the *London Times*, "too long played with human lives as pawns in a game of chess." Mr. Wilson no doubt imagines that he has a talent for it, as indeed he may have. But without contending this point, the American people should see to it that whatever excursions he may have made into this inviting field should immediately be voided of practical consequence to them.

THE FARMERS' ORGANIZATIONS.

THE differentiation of ideas and programmes within the farmers' movement is proceeding steadily though slowly and painfully. Representatives of the National Grange, Farmers' Union, National Board of Farm Organizations, Dairymen's League, American Farm Bureau Federation and a few others have succeeded in effecting a temporary coalition on what may be called a conservative platform. They have organized a committee whose function it will be to question presidential candidates on their stand in matters pertaining to agriculture and to the farmer. Numerically speaking the above mentioned organizations might seem a force to be reckoned with. The National Grange claims over 600,000 members; the Farmers' Union at least 500,000; while the Farm Bureau Federation at its recent convention claimed a membership of over a million. Discounting duplications and exaggerations the organizations referred to probably represent some 1,500,000 or 2,000,000 farmers. But numbers do not always mean strength or even dues in a farmers' organization. At present the cohesion among farmers is still weak and policies and platforms are frequently nothing more than the expression of the views of the leaders and officials. The National Board of Farm Organizations, for instance, which carries a formidable list of farmers' organizations on its letterhead, is in no sense the central authority or spokesman of its "affiliated" members. It depends upon voluntary contributions for its support and, in so far as can be ascertained, confines its activities to the calling of periodic conferences, lobbying, and possibly also to the promotion of exces-

sive publicity for its president, Charles T. Barrett. Beyond this it has little, if any power.

It is also doubtful whether the new committee formed by the above organizations has enough powers of cohesion to survive one presidential campaign. At present they are united in their sentiment against strikes, in their opposition to political co-operation with labour and to the national ownership of railroads, and in their desire for political influence in Washington. But whether they can evolve a broad programme of economic measures based upon a social conception of the place of agriculture in our national economy remains to be seen. Whatever hopes one may have in this direction are tempered by the knowledge that fundamentally the leaders and spokesmen of these organizations are business men and property-holders whose point of view is determined by the economic consideration of rising land-values and higher prices.

The progressive elements in the farmers' organizations have also taken steps to effect a more permanent union. They have gravitated for some time about the National Farmers' Council whose guiding spirit is George P. Hampton and whose programme includes the demand for government ownership of railroads, the nationalization of natural resources, the regulating of the packing industry, a system of higher income and excess profits taxation, co-operative credit and similar measures. The confused condition of agrarian opinion and organization is clearly shown by the fact that the Farmers' Council has drawn whatever support it has had from among the membership of those very organizations which officially and nationally have no use for either Mr. Hampton or his Council. On 16 February, the leaders of these insurgent elements representing the State Farmers' Unions of Nebraska, Illinois, Iowa, and Texas, the Grange of the State of Washington, the Wisconsin branch of the American Society of Equity, the Montana and Minnesota branches of the Society of Equity, and several other organizations met at Des Moines and organized the "United Farmers of America" for the purpose of bringing about the amalgamation of the progressive elements within all the farmers' organizations. The "United Farmers" have been active in promoting the organization of the Farmer-Labour Congressional Committee whose purpose is to bring about co-operation between labour and farmers in the coming political campaign.

Meanwhile, the only other large farmers' organization, the Non-Partisan League, which is primarily political and which is now operating in thirteen states and claims a membership of over 200,000 dues-paying members, is carrying on its own campaign without regard to the other organizations. In some states the Non-Partisan League enjoys the friendly or indifferent neutrality of the other agrarian organizations, but in many a state, for instance in New York, it is bitterly opposed by the Farm Bureaus, the Granges and the Farmers' Unions, as a "radical and socialistic" political party. In the Northwest, especially in Minnesota, Idaho and Montana, the Non-Partisan League has succeeded in perfecting a political alliance with labour which will be a formidable factor in the political situation this year.

Those who would have the farmers present a united front politically and economically are discouraged by the spectacle of the divisions described above and are exhorting the farmers to come together in one big federation. Curiously enough they hold up to the farmers the example of the American Federation of

Labour. But in the present state of agrarian development, the process of differentiation is bound to go on. The limits of the identity of interests of all farmers have not yet been ascertained. The voice of agricultural labour and of the poorer tenants has not been heard at all.

SABOTAGE.

Most of us have lately made the discovery that Mark Twain made on the second day of his apprenticeship as a Mississippi River pilot. He was turned out of bed in the middle of the night to stand his watch; and he says that while he always knew that steamboats ran all night, it never occurred to him until that moment that somebody had to stay awake to run them. It is pretty hard nowadays to get any work done; particularly on the little commonplace jobs that we always took for granted as bound to get themselves done somehow. Try getting a telephone-connection, or take a ride on a railway, or negotiate for some odds-and-ends of plumbing, painting, or carpenter-work; try getting some mechanical repairs made or some one to roll your lawn. A very short devotion to any of these exercises will carry a positive conviction about the availability of labour and of its supremely heretical attitude towards the primal curse. As for what is known as "a good job," there is an almost complete consensus of authority against its existence. Work is done, save under exceptional circumstances, perfunctorily, without interest and without responsibility; people work awhile and then quit, for no more significant reason than that they think they have done about enough.

Aggravating as this is, there is something to be said for it when one puts oneself in the artisan's place. What do we all want? Simply more time and opportunity to enjoy life; to go fishing; to cultivate human relations; to raise flowers, play with the dog, and get acquainted with the birds; to read a little, do something with music—in short, to do a great many things that do not fall in the received category of labour. Moreover, we want to do these things on our own, and not as prescribed by agencies which have the benevolent notion of uplifting and improving us by means of them. When we labour, we prefer to labour at something interesting, something that flatters the creative impulse and calls the instinct of workmanship into play; something that keeps us from being bored and yields a profitable return in satisfaction and joy. Well, but that is exactly what the workingman wants; he is exactly like us. If Americans were not the most unimaginative people in the world, they would have saved themselves the trouble of wading through reams of tosh about labour, by remembering that there is only one kind of people in the world, just people, just folks, and that what one wants—really and fundamentally wants—is just what the rest want. The capitalist's mental image of the socialist is the most laughable caricature in creation except one, and that is the socialist's mental image of the capitalist.

The funny little quacks at Washington and elsewhere who have undertaken to find out what ails the world and to prescribe for it, all say that salvation hinges on increased production and increased thrift. Labour gives its answer, not in words, but in actions more explicit than words; and it is precisely the answer that we ourselves give: Why increase production, why be thrifty, when thrift and productiveness result only in heaping up an economic accumulation for

governments to steal and squander? Why bind oneself to the mechanism of utterly uninteresting quantity-production for somebody else's exclusive profit? This is precisely our own attitude. We feel about our war-taxes and surtaxes and excess-profits taxes precisely as the labourer feels about his little income-tax of four per cent and his burden of indirect taxation; and our methods of resistance and evasion, while naturally more successful, are in principle the same as his. When we make our nice adjustments of production to demand, in order to maintain a maximum price, as we continually do, is not this just what the carpenter and plumber, the painter and repair-man, are doing—doing in effect, if not perhaps quite as thoughtfully? Is not, furthermore, their final object the same as ours; to command a larger leisure, to increase the margin of life within which they may do as they please, to enlarge their conception of the world as a place really to live in and to be enjoyed? That seems to be what we too, are instinctively after; and when we complain of the unwisdom and short-sightedness of labour's methods, we might take a second look at our own, to see whether they differ appreciably, and if so, in what respects.

Our civilization has been victimized by a tradition, a superstition, begotten upon it by a sort of syndicated parentage of four men whose very appearance and demeanour were enough, one would say, to warn against them at first sight any race that had an ounce of humour in its make-up. Mr. Gradgrind—Thomas Gradgrind of Coketown—laid down the law that the world was a world of Fact and Labour, and that the people like Sleary who preferred to see it as a world of Fancy and Love and Enjoyment were disreputable and no better than knaves. In this he was seconded and reinforced by Mr. Chadband, who furnished a theory of religion quite to match. Then came Mr. Quinion, with a theory of social life and manners. The outward and visible signs, the external expressions, of our civilization's inward and spiritual life, are shaped by the hand of Quinion. Quinion laid out our towns, designed our buildings. The literature we all read, the conversation we all hear, the plays we all see, the diversions and amusements we all engage in, the whole of hundred per cent. Americanism, in short, considered on the lighter side, is from specifications furnished by Quinion; as on the more serious side, it is from those furnished by Gradgrind and Chadband. Finally, Mr. Pecksniff provided a theory of the State and of patriotic duty. Mr. Pecksniff has been very busy during the war; he organized the four-minute men and trained them so thoroughly that one could hardly tell which was pupil and which was master. Mr. Pecksniff inspired the National Security League; he animated the drives; he dictated our Russian policy; nay, some say that by a trick of metempsychosis he managed to get in at the Versailles Conference under the bodily appearance of President Wilson—though, to be fair, there is great doubt about this.

Thus our civilization has made itself, under the inexplicable domination of these four men, a composite of the ideals of Gradgrind, Chadband, Quinion, and Pecksniff. Now because those ideals are unsound, because they are in the long-run wholly impracticable and impossible, they have broken down. All the work that has been done under their guidance will have to be done over again and done better. The new civilization must satisfy more of the permanent instincts of mankind, and satisfy them more abundantly. That is what the present régime of sabotage asserts; and we are all taking an active part in the carrying on of

that régime—capitalist, employer, labourer, monopolist, tradesman—all of us, and all from the same motives and with the same ends in view. All of us, judged by our actions, are proclaiming determinedly that the ideals and theories of Gradgrind, Chadband, Quinion and Pecksniff will no longer serve. Why then should we keep up this solemn and deadly pretence of seriousness about them? We have made, under our false lights, rather a mess of things; we know why we have done so; and we are disinclined to go on and make it worse. Why not then frankly administer the tonic of humour, laugh at ourselves all round, and then turn in, as the Russians seem to be doing, to construct a life for the individual that shall be really exhilarating and enjoyable, and a collective life that shall be really interesting and stimulating? The materials for such a life are all here in the greatest abundance; all we need is the freedom to use them.

A VICTORIAN KALEIDOSCOPE.

Books of yesterday which open doors on more restful times, are a wonderful antidote to the stress and strain of these turbulent days through which we are passing. I have lately been re-reading Lady Ritchie's "Blackstick Papers," published only twelve years ago it is true, yet depicting by-gone generations with a serenity and charm which have ceased to exist in the hurry of the modern world of letters. Such a book gives us renewed strength with which to take up life again, from the assurance it unconsciously gives that the lasting values of life, the human qualities of heart and brain translated into achievements of true art, live, and will continue to live. Thinking always lightly of her own talent, perhaps because in her day she came in touch with such a host of famous names, Anne Thackeray Ritchie wrote this, her last book, with so great a simplicity and naturalness that its perusal leaves us with a whole gallery of portraits, each distinct and full of character.

It will be remembered that after placing her essays under the kindly tutelage of the Fairy Blackstick, the good fairy of "The Rose and The Ring," Lady Ritchie transports us, by means of an old book on Haydn, to Vienna. Vienna in its heyday of music, when Rameau's influence was still recent, and Mozart, Haydn, and Gluck were alive. She relates how it is told that "Gluck had his harpsichord carried out into a flowering meadow, and placing a bottle of champagne at either end, then and there devised 'Che farò' for the delight of generations to come." But the paper is mainly concerned with Haydn, and in the short sketch of his life we get an illuminating glimpse of the autocratic manners of that day. We are told that Haydn's music was once being played to a certain prince, who liked it and interrupted the performance to engage the services of the young musician, whom he then and there exhorted: "Go and dress yourself like a professor; do not let me see you any more in this trim—you cut a pitiful figure; get a new coat, a wig and buckles; a collar and red heels to your shoes. Go your way and everything will be given to you." After which it was Haydn's duty to compose a fresh piece of music every day. It seems strange that so much spontaneity can have resulted from such arbitrary ruling. We are also told that Haydn said: "When I was employed on 'The Creation,' before I sat down to the piano-forte I prayed to God with earnestness that He would enable me to praise Him worthily." And so the narrative, enlivened by anecdotes and quotations, runs on to the musician's death, which was hastened by the shock of four bombs falling close to his house in the French invasion of Vienna in 1809, when he was already old and enfeebled.

The scene then changes to the sea-cliffs of Wales used as a setting for a pen-picture of Felicia Hemans, the poet. Perhaps "Casabianca" is no longer printed in all school Readers, but to the generation to whom it was familiar in that way and whom it served principally as an excellent ground-work for parodies, it must come as something of a shock to read for the first time of the tragic and very human history of its authoress. But if life was unkind to her in most respects, she seems at least to have had the consolation of good friends and of complete success in her work, for Lady Ritchie writes: "We learn that editors wrote by every post for contributions from her pen, and admirers trod on each other's heels, and packets of poetry arrived by every mail; also there came messages and compliments from Amer-

ica, where, if she would have consented to settle down, Felicia was offered a definite competence by a publishing firm."

Next we are taken to Scotland; to historic St. Andrews, with its many ruins. It is in October, when the greyness of the old town is brightened by the red gowns of the University students, and the scholars of its many schools are back at work. As Lady Ritchie says:

You might almost expect to meet the Pied Piper himself passing with long strides over the stones, in his fantastic garb and playing as he goes; so urgent and pressing are the swarms of rosy children hurrying by. . . . These small Scots, without exception, carry books and copybooks or little satchels slung on their shoulders; for it is no wicked demon, but a benevolent spirit, the Pied Piper of education, that is calling them irresistibly.

This paper is prefaced with a short description of a Sunday walk upon the sands. How vivid is the scene—the autumn atmosphere, the promenading people and the distant sea. The author curiously omits all reference to that mecca of the golfing world, the Royal and Ancient, and to the sport itself. To most people St. Andrews is far better known for its golf than for its learning, and the most typical illustration of the place would be the teaching of the young Scots, not to read and write, but to play across the Swilcan Burn with tiny clubs when they are scarcely old enough to toddle.

From the rugged, wind-swept coast of Fife, Lady Ritchie harks back to the mellow land of music. One of her most delightful papers is a miniature life of Joachim, for here she had come into personal contact with the subject of her sketch. She traces his career from the beginning on the toy fiddle; through the wonderful time in Leipsic, when Mendelssohn, Schumann, Clara Wieck, Pauline Viardot, David and others were clustered there in one brilliant constellation; to later times in Weimar, under Liszt. (Incidentally she tells how Wagner, poor and despondent, wrote to Liszt from Paris, imploring him to save his "Lohengrin" from being "buried for ever in a sepulchre of paper and fruitless hope.") And so, on through varied personal recollections of the great violinist's personality and playing, to a realistic picture of his class, working on Beethoven's concerto for the violin. Joachim's playing once more resounds in all its beauty as one reads these glowing pages.

To recall all the varied papers that this book contains would take too long, pleasant though such a task would be. One entitled "Nohant in 1874," is, however, especially delightful. This also is prefaced by a very perfect little prose description of another Sunday, but this time the scene is the busy garden of an inn on the outskirts of the great forest of Fontainebleau. We see the forest, and the river, the leaping fish, the birds, the sunlight and the shade, and all the different types of people on the terrace watching the scene, eating and drinking, and light-heartedly enjoying themselves after the good French fashion. All the characteristic sounds are there too; the wind, the singing of some soldiers, the wailing of infants, the noise and bustle as the busy waitresses move in and out among the little tables. We breathe the fragrance of the pines, and, so French is this bourgeois scene, we can almost smell the garlic. Short as the whole description is, it yet includes the passage of time through the festive day until the veil of evening is lightly drawn across the picture, and it resolves like a dream into Lady Ritchie herself writing there at the inn on a June evening in 1901, writing of George Sand, who had also been there or thereabouts with her son many years before.

Lady Ritchie writes of the novelist at Nohant in the days of her maturity, in the days of her old age one would say of another woman, but old seems a harsh word to apply to such a vital personality as George Sand, and to one who so completely retained the vigour and freshness of her powers. The descriptions of the life at Nohant are taken from the account of a young Frenchman, who set them down on the occasion of his first visit to the place, so that they have a force and directness often lacking in reminiscences written long after events have taken place. We seem to see the very furniture of the rooms and hear the voices of their occupants, and know just the homely natural way in which they spent the evening. It is good to read of the devotion of the peasants to George Sand, and of the unfailing care she found time to lavish on them; notwithstanding her love for her children and grandchildren, the distractions caused by innumerable visitors, and by the crowd of youthful aspirants who besieged her at all times for assistance and advice—all these things having to be done in days and nights no longer than those in which we ordinary mortals achieve so little. Here are quotations, too, from some of the letters written by George Sand in those latter days of her life; real, personal letters, giving a wealth of wise advice so tenderly and natu-

ally that we feel through them what a constant prop she must have been to others and how unexacting for herself. Lady Ritchie writes of her: "She ripened to the last." What more could be said? When we have all learned the secret of perpetual growth we shall at last have the clue to making the world the beautiful place it some day may be. By that time, too, we may have learned to judge goodness by different standards from those we use at present.

In other pages of the "Blackstick Papers" George Sand appears again, in those devoted to Turgéniev, who is quoted as having written of her at the time of her death:

It is eight years since I saw her for the first time, the enthusiastic admiration which she excited in me formerly was gone. I no longer adored her, but it was not possible to enter into her private life without becoming her adorer in another sense—a better one perhaps; each one felt at once that he was in the presence of an infinitely rich and benevolent nature where all egotism had long been reduced to cinders by the inextinguishable flame of poetic enthusiasm and faith in the ideal, and besides all this there was a certain unconscious aureole, something high, free, and heroic; believe me, George Sand is one of our saints. . . . What a heart of gold was hers, what an absence of all false and unworthy sentiment; what a brave man she was, and what a good woman!

Turgéniev himself is here for our acquaintance, simple and natural and great. We become familiar with Sparskoë in all its loneliness, and with its remote Russian surroundings. "The country here," says Turgéniev, "strikes me as pale, as well as the sky, the verdure, the earth; but it is a warm and golden paleness; it would be only pretty if it were not for the great lines, the great uniform spaces which add grandeur to it all."

Celebrities of an earlier generation, the Horace Smiths, the Berry sisters, and old Horace Walpole, also pass through Lady Ritchie's pages, threading a dignified course among the crowd of notable Victorians with whom she was acquainted from childhood, for, as she has somewhere said, she and her sister went everywhere with Thackeray, like his two little shadows. Artists, writers, and musicians all formed part of one great charmed circle, but looking back we are struck by the little practical interest they seem to have taken in the affairs of their own day. Engrossed in their creative efforts, they lived in a world apart, and while literature was gaining some of its landmarks, Cobden and Bright were fighting in public causes, against almost superhuman odds of national apathy and indifference, alone and unaided. It is for the genius of a future age to weld the arts and sciences into the common service of humanity, that truth and beauty may become the common heritage and lodestone of us all.

B. U. BURKE.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

DEMOBILIZING THE SOLDIER'S MIND.

SIRS:—I see that an editorial writer of the *New York Times* says of Philip Gibbs' new book "Now It Can Be Told":

His justification for writing in that strain at all is more than dubious. It is not 'war' that should horrify Mr. Gibbs, but the German Government. What alternative does Mr. Gibbs propose to the horrors he calls war?"

Philip Gibbs lived the war as searchingly as any soldier. I remember the day in October, 1914, when he vowed to me he would write this book. Together we had been through the battle of Dixmude. We had served as stretcher-bearers to the French *Fusiliers Marins* who held the town through the bombardment of that afternoon of 21 October. Then Gibbs had sat up all night and written the story which made him the most famous English correspondent of the war. He rested and then came to our ambulance-car, and said, quietly: "I shall spend the rest of my life in telling what war really is."

In that *Times* phrase of "the horrors he calls war" is the great gulf fixed that divides the returned soldier from the civilian. The soldier wishes his incalculable suffering to be reckoned with. He will not forgive the civilian unless he too takes the plunge into profound regions and breasts those dark currents. It is true that the soldier is silenced by the chatter back home, and refuses to make parlour-tricks of his agony. But at unexpected moments, some stark phrase pries loose from the inner despair. It will be well for us if we listen now. He will make us listen before he is done. There is no lack of expression when he is with his mates. Then the hurt ironic talk flows free. He looks around on his homeland:—"So this is the world and these are the people whom we kept safe. And they intend to continue making the world in their own image. And they are willing to let us repeat the experience. They will expect us to be

the first line of defence, after their maps are drawn. They will hush all talk of 'horrors'. They will again give us the 'glory' of war."

But these soldiers will not be fully freed from their experience till they can speak easily of it as of a dim event that fell on another. Till the frozen zone is crossed, nothing creative can come. Gilbert Cannan puts it: "Life at present is more tragic than it has ever been, and it is only in terms of tragedy that it can be understood, and tragedy cannot be intellectually apprehended until humanity has sobbed out its grief, there is not anywhere an idea or an emotion which can live fruitfully or pass electrically from soul to soul."

This knotting of hurt and angry feeling with which the war has left its participants is due to the discovery of the lie that is at the heart of government. It is the lie that enables the State to expand. That lie consists in clothing organized murder in the language of the idea. When emotion has once been sufficiently betrayed, it turns ironical. "In 1914 your country needs you. In 1919 nobody wants you." And when that is learned, the answer is an ironic controlled play on the drab fact. But irony never carried a people through to victory. At present there is nothing left to believe in. So the only revolution as yet is surface-change—wages and hours and factory devices. I am, etc.

New York City.

ARTHUR GLEASON.

PATRIOTISM AND PROGRAMMES.

SIRS:—The note in the first issue of your interesting paper on the return to wisdom of the programme-makers reminds me of a letter written by a British peer, Earl Dysart, to a village committee which had invited him to preside at a dinner and concert to be given to the men of the locality who had served in the war. He wrote as follows:

If you will not think it out of place, may I express the hope that the programme will include selections from some of the best composers? I dislike intensely the suggestion that working men, of whom there will be several present, are incapable of appreciating, may I suggest, Bach and Beethoven. Those who have taken the trouble to place good music before the working classes have proved over and over again the exact contrary to be the case.

The suggestion was, however, not accepted, and the programme was made up of comic songs and recitations. The "best composers" must wait awhile before they reach the programmes of some English village concerts. But the English towns at no time during the war neglected them, or interned them; they kept their place irrespective of nationality. Some concert-goers whose musical knowledge was limited lost their heads for a time; but musical England was never swayed by uncritical critics and hysterical persons whose zeal seemed to be their only means of gaining attention. I am, etc.,

A. R.

THEY ORDER THIS MATTER BETTER—

SIRS: I, too, believe in government ownership of all transportation, but the situation is so complex that a solution of it is not easy. The railroad companies throughout the country have built their roads with tremendous bonded indebtedness and with thousands of millions of watered stock, so that I am not sure that it would pay the nation to take over the roads at the valuation which the companies would place upon them; but one thing I am quite sure of and that is, that if the people want to control the present railroads, the proper thing to do would be to tax them, and with the proceeds of the taxes, build government trunk lines with which to control the railroads held by the companies.

You may think that this is a very radical proposal and altogether without precedent, but I would remind you of the fact that when the Netherlands Government granted the right to the Holland Railroad Company to build its lines, the Company started profiteering. The Government thereupon set to work and built competing lines to every part of the country, and to-day you will find in Holland probably the most efficient railroad system in the world, and the privately owned railroad is controlled as to rates and everything else, by the Government lines along side of it.

If the Company makes its rates higher than those of the Government line, the citizens will not patronize the private company but will use the Government road. To my mind this is the only way in which real control can be had by the people. The Government may appoint commissions to control the railroads but the railroad interests will control the commissions.

One thing is very clear to me and that is that unless some steps are taken to rectify the present economic conditions in this country, there is going to be trouble. It is no use trying

to blink the fact. I am not stating a theory, but a condition. All the "hot air" and the chasing of a few Russian Reds will not solve the problem, indeed such behaviour only tends to aggravate it. I am, etc.

S. P.

THE ITALIAN SITUATION.

SIRS: Among the letters addressed to the editors of the *Freeman* in your first issue, there is one dated from Florence, written by Sir Francis Vane, expressing his view in regard to present conditions in Italy. It will perhaps interest you to see another opinion, this time from an American, Colonel Bartlett of the American Red Cross in Italy—who reaches very different conclusions from those arrived at by your distinguished English correspondent.

Being myself an Italian and therefore perhaps open to the charge of prejudice, I feel that I ought not to attempt to answer Sir Francis Vane's letter. I should like, however, to suggest to Sir Francis a perusal of Dr. Dillon's recently published "Inside Story of the Peace Conference," which gives quite another opinion as to the worth of the Pact of London. And as to Italy being upon the verge of bankruptcy, I would refer your correspondent to Mr. Keynes' words on that subject. Perhaps Sir Francis is not cognizant of the following facts:

Italy's national wealth in 1913, according to economists of international repute, was appraised at 90 billions, only 20 of which constitute her foreign debt—part of which she owes to England and France, and the remainder is her share of the inter-Allied loans granted to Europe by the United States. Italy now stands clear of any separate indebtedness to this country. She has paid back every dollar she received for the purchase of war-materials.

I should like also to remind Sir Francis of the courageous financial policy adopted by the Italian Government. Since the second year of the war, the Government has imposed upon the people gradual and adequate taxation, for the provision of the amortization-fund and to pay the interest due upon the debts which it was compelled to contract in order to carry out to a victorious end Italy's full share of the Allies' burden. Recently, to reduce as much as possible the inflation of the currency, which with the adverse trade balance has been causing a depreciation of the lira, the Italian Government issued an internal loan of 20 billion lire, which was oversubscribed. For a country near bankruptcy, this seems a rather remarkable achievement. I enclose a copy of Colonel Bartlett's letter which I hope you will be able to publish in your columns. I am, etc.,

New York City.

DAVID A. COSTANTINI.

Colonel Bartlett's Letter

... This letter will give you roughly my idea of the present situation in Italy. It would be a bold man who would prophesy in regard to any part of the world. It is possible, of course, that all I write will be proved a dream even before you read it. If Collins is right in his "My Year in Italy," right not in his statement of facts, but in his deductions, then I am on the wrong track. But I believe he has made his deductions without knowing the race and with a fatal exclusion of several classes in the social fabric who are of the greatest importance in its structure.

The Italian newspapers are undoubtedly ill friends of their own people. But they are equalled in their misrepresentations by our own and English newspaper-correspondents. These men come here almost always with no knowledge of the language and with no one to guide them, and after a profound study of conditions lasting from two days to, in extreme cases, three weeks, are considered qualified to instruct the readers of their papers. But during this long period of preparation they are expected to send home daily pictures of the life here, ascribing always the causes to the effects. And they must bear in mind that the editor wants "stuff" that will satisfy tastes jaded by sensationalism.

I have now lived through the periods before May Day, before Lenin's birthday, before the food riots in July, before the elections, and before the opening of Parliament. I regret to say that my income has not been as much increased as I could have wished, in that I could get no one of the calamity howlers to take the bets I offered that the promised disasters would not eventuate. Once after offering to bet 5000 lire I found someone willing to bet five, but even this I have never had paid to me.

The political situation here is no more grave than it is generally in the world, and there is not the slightest probability of revolution. I do not care what the self-styled experts say. So far from the election of the 156 Socialist deputies being an evil, it is rather the promise of a near settlement in this country of the conflict between capital and labour. That disorders, sporadic and unrelated, in different cities will occur as they have occurred in the past, is true. The subversive elements, generally calculated as numbering

10,000 in all Italy, are noisy and in evidence to a degree far out of proportion to their numbers. The disorders following the address of the Crown and the swearing-in of Deputies on 1 December, are proof of this. The general strikes declared in Rome, Florence, Milan, Turin, and Arezzo were not called by the Socialist party. They were the result of the activities of the extreme elements in the party who were dissatisfied with the restrained attitude assumed by the Socialist deputies. Horrors of all sorts were loudly heralded here on the day and a half the strike lasted. I passed through the center of the city morning and afternoon, both on foot and in automobile. I talked with over a hundred workmen. The two clashes between the authorities and the evil elements who were seeking an opportunity for disorder, occupied about fifteen minutes each. Otherwise it was like Christmas afternoon. The workman was out in his Sunday clothes with his wife and children and the cinematographs coined money. All the workmen I talked with were against the strike. But, Collins to the contrary, labour is extraordinarily well organized here and the duty of seeing that a strike order is obeyed is in the hands of young and irresponsible *giovinastri* who intimidate the less enterprising workman whose thought does not go beyond his day's work, its pay and his family.

This brings me to the most unfortunate and serious aspect of these months of agitation in which politics have played a larger part than the real interest of the country. The high wages now being paid and the feeling of over-importance engendered in the minds of workmen have tended to lessen the productivity of the country. As for instance, the straw-hat makers of Empoli can earn in three days enough to support them for a week. As a result they will work but the three days. The exporters have large orders from the U. S. A. and South America and cannot get them filled. Carpenters are in great demand and are exceedingly well paid and they do about six hours work a day and won't work six days a week. It is almost impossible to get work done no matter what price is offered. This in my opinion is the really dangerous phase of the present situation. I am beginning to hedge on my earlier opinion that Nitti's Ministry will fall speedily. He sees the writing on the wall and evidently intends to move with the current. His Ministry will undoubtedly be remade. But it begins to look as if he would be able to hold together a majority. The union that existed between the Socialist party and the P. P. I., *Partito Popolare Italiano* (the Catholic party), has come to a complete end because they can find no grounds for agreement in regard to divorce and public instruction. This leaves of the 550 deputies, two blocks that will be rather difficult to manage—the 156 Socialists and 101 P. P. I. Little by little, however, the other parties are fusing themselves into a body that will act in unison. It is generally believed that despite the strong organizations of the two above-mentioned parties the various deputies will not infrequently vote contrary to the instructions of their chiefs. It was very easy for the Socialists, when they were an almost negligible minority, to criticise. Now they feel the responsibility of power and the results in sobriety of attitude are already evident. After reading the accounts of the first four meetings of Parliament, you may laugh at my use of the word "sobriety." I think in the end, however, you will find it justified.

Out of Italy came the original idea of democratic government as well as many of the ideas that form the basis of our social fabric. It is my belief that Italy will develop the ideas that will solve the crying problem of to-day, the contact between labour and capital.

RECHRISTENING THE HAPPY ENDING.

SIRS: I have fidgeted through the four acts—or was it forty?—of "Mamma's Affair," and I have read Walter Prichard Eaton's blessing of the play in your first issue; but, for the life of me, I cannot bring the two things together. Still I suppose Mr. Eaton should be allowed to testify before sentence is passed:

Mamma's Affair [he says] may well class as American, as a revelation, at the least of the modern American woman attaining her mental and artistic majority.

For the benefit of those who have been spared a view of this cracking of the chrysalis, let me say that the "modern American woman" referred to is a young lady—that is to say, a heroine—who for the first two hours of the play is about to marry against her will, and is generally and devotedly subject to the whims of her cantankerous, neurasthenic and thoroughly objectionable mother. Later on in the evening one begins to think that Miss Revlote is about to achieve a personality of her own, when—bang!—she sinks for the third and last time into the arms and individuality of a brand-new husband of her own choosing. If the young lady had climbed down a ladder and ridden away on Sir Launcelot's charger, clinging to Sir Launcelot's middle, would not Mr. Eaton have been spared the trouble of finding a new name for this old business of exchanging masters? I am, etc.,

GALLERIUS.

THE MONKEY-WRENCH.

In the event of a crisis in our economic conditions, the average American appears to be always ready to load the blame on some group or class, which he accuses of extortionate greed, and at the same time credits with a remarkable power to make that greed effective in robbing the people. As a result, he is all for the Government going after these wicked people with a club; or he hopes for a revolution which will overthrow the Government and enable his own class to grasp power which he fondly imagines will not be misused. How seldom does the average man stop to consider that there may be some serious defect in the mechanism of our economic system for which he is as much responsible as anybody else! On the one hand the wage-earning classes accuse employers of "profit-eering," that is to say of taking advantage of unusual circumstances to make huge profits which they then refuse to share with labour. But if so, why blame the employer? Even if these huge profits are not to any great extent the reward for unusual services to the community, but are largely due to combinations, monopolies, hoarding, stock-watering, and speculation; nevertheless, are not the employers merely following the perfectly natural, moral, and unobjectionable principle of producing or buying at the lowest cost, and of selling in the dearest market they can find? If this perfectly natural principle, which every man feels justified in adopting, leads to practices which appear to be not for the public benefit, why, instead of continually invoking governmental interference with business activities, would it not be better to inquire if there may not be something fundamentally unsound in our economic system, whose remedy would cause the abandonment of these practices or would render them harmless?

On the other hand employers are now hurling back at the wage-earners the cry of "labour-profiteering" because of the continual strikes and threats of strikes for higher and higher wages, and are accusing labour of tyranny and of usurping the power of Congress. And yet the wage-earners are only exercising their right to sell their labour in the dearest market, and to refuse to work at all if they do not wish to. In their turn they are making combinations; and in the face of a rising cost of living which outstrips wages, they are using their right to quit work as a threat. Blind they may be in the use of strikes, which by checking productive processes only add to the cost of living, but it is futile to fulminate against them as selfish and extortionate. Either the cost of living must be reduced or wages must be increased; and if the employing classes cannot see any way of accomplishing the former result, why should they expect greater wisdom from the wage-earners? Instead then of urging government interference with labour by legislation against strikes and by legislation suppressing discussion of industrial problems, would it not be better to stop abusing labour and to inquire seriously into the causes of high living-cost?

Meanwhile the dreary round continues. High prices prevent effective demand for products. Production is thus restricted and cost of production increased, still further adding to prices. Wages advanced to meet prices drive up producing-costs, and hence add still more to prices. Higher wages also add to governmental expenditure thus forcing up taxes; and taxes, as levied today, discourage enterprise and industry, again checking production. Then prices rise again, to be followed by wages and taxes, and so it goes apparently *ad infinitum* while everybody blames

everybody else. What we need now is to cool our anger over the actions of others and quietly to look at the problem as one requiring calm thought rather than ebullient emotion.

Can we not think of any more fundamental remedy for untoward economic conditions than the old, discredited practice of governmental price-fixing, than raids on storage ware-houses, injunctions against strikes, and jail-sentences for those who, in someone's opinion, are making too much money? All these things are acts of domestic warfare, stirring up hatred and class-antagonism, and futile because they attack evils instead of preventing them. Is it not time for all classes to stop laying blame on others and to examine the system for which all are responsible?

The consensus of opinion in regard to the high cost of living, indicates that to reduce cost we must increase production. There can be but little question that this is a correct judgment. Increased supply of goods will doubtless bring down prices. Nevertheless the remedy proposed is only a small part of the answer to the problem. It is entirely unsatisfactory, unless it be shown at the same time how the increase of production can be brought about. It is one thing to urge on everyone the necessity for greater productive effort; and quite another thing to make sure that everyone shall have the opportunity to make the effort, and to secure a decent living while making it. It is useless to demand more work from those who are driven to the limit of effort to make ends meet, and it is bitter irony to demand it from those who seek work in vain. As long as involuntary unemployment is chronic, full productive effort is impossible.

To maintain increasing production, what is required is unrestricted opportunity for all to engage in productive enterprise, free from the toll of monopoly and from the disheartening interference and exactions of government. This condition can be reached and maintained only by removing the obstacles to production and the premiums on speculation which at all times, good or bad, normal or abnormal, are characteristic of our present economic system. There is a monkey-wrench in the machinery of production and the first thing to do is to take it out.

There are some things in our economic system the soundness of which the average man is likely to take for granted. Because the great majority of us (including the writer) are satisfied that our system of private title to land is sound in principle, we fail to consider the possibility that the application of the principle may be defective. Let us then examine our land-system for a moment, and if possible, without prejudice.

In the first place we must recognize that it is a system (adopted from England) of private *title*, not a system of private *property*, although generally so considered. The real ownership of the land lies in the sovereign State, not in its individual citizens¹. The individual citizen, it is true, has exclusive possession as against any other citizen or group of citizens, but this is merely a privilege conferred on him by the State; that is, by the community as a whole. This privilege, moreover, is not irrevocable. At any time, the State can take possession of the land, determining in its courts what compensation should be paid the so-called owner. And the State always will so take possession unless the owner pays his annual rent in the form of taxes. Still another thing which shows a lack of absolute ownership is that the holder of

title to land is restricted in many ways in the use of the land to which he holds title². In particular, he cannot sell it or give it away, except subject to the jurisdiction of the State. A citizen of one of our States, Massachusetts for example, cannot sell or bequeath his land to a foreign government in such a way as to alienate it from the State's jurisdiction. He can transfer the title to a foreign government, but if so that Government does not secure absolute possession, but must pay taxes to the State of Massachusetts, must obey its laws, must accept its restrictions, and must yield up the land when demanded, for compensation determined in Massachusetts courts.

Practically speaking our system of private title to land is equivalent to a system of leasing by the State, generally, however, through the municipality and for its benefit. The lease is transferable and perpetual, and the rental paid for it is in the form of a tax, variable in amount from year to year.³

On the face of it, this looks like a just and workable system. On the one hand the rights of the individual appear to have protection. The lessee can not be dispossessed of his lease except in case of governmental need, and in such case he must be compensated for loss or damage. Moreover, he is permitted to sell or bequeath the lease to another, and the latter in accepting it assumes the responsibility for the payment of rent to the State. On the other hand, there would seem to be sufficient protection also for the rights of the public in this system of land-tenure, since in case the land increases in value, following increased public demand for it, the rent or tax paid by the lessee is increased, while in case of lessened public demand and consequent decrease in value, the rent or tax is decreased.

What then is wrong with the system? Where is the monkey-wrench in the machinery? It will be found if we examine into the method of determining the annual rental or tax.

Under a perpetual leasing system, such as our so-called system of private property in land has been shown to be, it would seem to be natural for the State to charge the tenant (or so-called owner) an annual rental at least approximating in amount what the State's tenant, in case he did not himself wish to use the land, could obtain from a sub-tenant under a long lease. In other words, it would seem just and wise that the State's tenant should be required, for the exclusive use of a piece of land, to pay in rent as much, or at least nearly as much, as any sub-tenant would have to pay him for the same privilege of exclusive use. It is, however, a fact (well known but little realized) that under our system of land-tenure the rental or tax paid by the State's tenant is only a small portion of what he can exact from a sub-tenant. To see that this is so, let us consider how the rental of the State's tenant is determined.

The usual process is, first, to determine the value of the State tenant's privilege of exclusive possession, as measured by the premium for which he can dispose of his title, and secondly to tax this value at the local rate of taxation. For example, if the privilege of exclusive possession of a tract of land, or site, is worth \$10,000 (or, in common parlance if the value of the land is \$10,000) and the tax rate is twenty

¹"It is a received and undeniable principle of law that all lands in England are held immediately by the King."—Blackstone.

²"The first thing the student has to do is to get rid of the idea of absolute ownership. Such an idea is quite unknown in English law. No man in law is absolute owner of his lands, but only holds estate in them."—Williams, on Real Property.

³"The existing land tax ought not to be regarded as a tax, but as a rent charge in favour of the public."—J. S. Mill "Principles of Political Economy," Book V, Chapter 2, Section 6.

dollars per \$1000, then the annual tax or rent to the State amounts to \$200. What we have now to consider is the comparison of this figure (\$200) with the rent that can be obtained from a sub-tenant.

Since the privilege of owning the land would not be worth \$10,000 unless the rental obtainable were approximately sufficient to pay not only the tax but also the current rate of interest on \$10,000 the rental would amount in this case (assuming five per cent as the interest rate) to about \$700; that is \$200 for the tax and \$500 for interest. This sum (\$700), it will be noted, is three and one-half times the amount of the tax. With a more modest rate of taxation, let us say ten dollars in \$1000, the tax would be only \$100, and the sub-rental value \$600 or six times the tax.

It appears then that with ordinary rates of taxation ranging from ten dollars to twenty dollars in \$1000, the tenant of the State can exact from a sub-tenant a rental from three and one-half to six times what he himself has to pay *for the very same privilege*, and it is this failure of the State to secure a rent more nearly commensurate with the value of the privilege accorded, which is at the bottom of our economic troubles.

It is not maintained here, however, nor should it be assumed, that land-owners, the tenants of the State, are, as a class, in any way benefited by this system which allows them to hold land for an annual payment so much smaller than what they can secure by sub-letting. The prices they have paid as purchasers of this privilege have perhaps, as often as not, been greater than what the privilege proved to be worth, and they are as much the victims of the bad system as any one else and to no greater extent are they to blame for it. It does, however, as will presently be seen, give them a motive for sabotage, to the great injury of the community.

And now, how does this system restrict production? The unduly low rental paid by the tenant of the State causes restricted production:

- (1) by creating high premiums for land titles, or in other words, high prices for land, which represent heavy and unnecessary overhead charges on business enterprise.
- (2) by creating a premium on the practice of holding valuable land, unrented and inadequately used, thereby artificially restricting the amount of land available for industrial purposes.
- (3) by diverting into private pockets the rental value of the land, the natural revenue of the State, thus making necessary the heavy taxation of all business enterprise.

(1) *High prices for land.*⁴ Abnormally high prices for land are burdensome overhead charges on business, because they force the investment of an excessive amount of capital at the very start, since land on which to do business is the first requisite. High prices of land, often looked upon as community assets, are in fact community liabilities, representing as they do the premium which must be paid before business can be begun. If a larger proportion of the rental value of the land were required to be paid the State, the price of a site would be less, thus reducing the capital required for establishing a business; while the increased rental to the State would be paid out of the business as earned, and would supersede the payment of interest on the capital otherwise neces-

sary. The price of land in the big centers has risen to fabulous figures; and the price of farm-land advanced from \$15.57 per acre in 1900 to \$45.55 per acre in 1915; and only recently it is reported that there is a boom in the prices of farm-land in Iowa and Nebraska, resulting in prices being paid as high as \$600 per acre.

(2) *Speculation.* The increasing price of land not only puts a burdensome overhead charge on business enterprise, but the possibility of big increases in price creates an inducement to hold land, not for the purpose of using it, but in the hope of securing a speculative profit at the expense of the actual user. When this possibility of profit is coupled with a comparatively small annual carrying charge or tax, and with the certainty that the use of land will be penalized by the taxes on improvements, on buildings and on the profits of business, it is not the land-owner who should be blamed if he practises the form of sabotage which consists in holding valuable land out of use. He is no more to blame than any other citizen equally responsible for a system which creates a motive for an injurious practice. If the greater part of the rental value of the land were taken by the state, this practice could never pay, and would therefore cease. There would thus be removed the most effective restriction on the employment of labour and capital in industry.

That lands of tremendous value are to-day held out of use, so that industry is forced to maintain itself on land inferior in quality, or less advantageously situated, there is no doubt. The values of vacant and under-improved land in the big cities, as reported by assessing-departments, are astounding; while in the case of agricultural land, so much is held out of use at prohibitive prices that Secretary Lane in his desire to give the soldiers an opportunity to secure farms felt obliged to resort to an expensive and extravagant plan of reclamation.

(3) *Taxation.* Finally, as an obstacle to production there are hampering taxes, local, State and Federal, of great variety. Of these the most discouraging to industry are the local taxes on buildings and improvements, and on machinery and merchandise, the State and Federal taxes on earned incomes and profits, and the Federal tariff-taxes on food, clothing, and other necessities.

Even the taxes on unearned incomes and on inheritances can at least be looked upon but as a choice of evils. Although they do not check production to the same extent, they nevertheless divert from productive enterprise a vast amount of labour. To realize this we have but to consider the amount of labour involved in their collection, not only by the tax-departments of the State and Federal governments, but by the taxpayers themselves, and the lawyers they hire, in the making of detailed and complicated returns. All these burdensome taxes are made necessary by the failure of our land-system to secure a proper proportion of the rental-value of the land for local, State and Federal Governments. It is not difficult to show that these rental-values are alone more than enough to supply all needed revenue.

In summarizing the above, it appears that the first step towards the improvement of economic conditions is to remove the obstacles to production by securing as public revenue a much larger proportion of the rental value of land. The failure to do this constitutes the monkey-wrench in the machinery of production. Unless it is removed, successful operation is not to be expected.

JOHN S. CODMAN.

⁴The report for 1919 of the Commissioners of Taxes and Assessments of the City of New York, gives the assessed valuation of vacant parcels of land as \$553,434,600. It also states, "Every parcel which contains any improvement, however slight, is counted as improved."

HORATIO BOTTOMLEY, M. P.

IN a day when cool, free, generous discussion offers the only cure for overheated feelings, each nation of the Western world is distracted by a small but noisy group of men. These voices come mainly from three professions—editors, clergymen and politicians. It was the misfortune of these men that from hardening of the arteries they were unable to play their part in the battle-line. So their vibrations have passed out into words. England has such a man in Horatio Bottomley, editor of the weekly, *John Bull*, which sells by the million. Mr. Bottomley flourishes. In addition to owning and editing *John Bull*, he partly controls the *National News*, the *Sunday Evening Telegraph*, and he contributes the leading article to the *Sunday Pictorial*. The mainspring of his inner life he revealed in the House of Commons on 4 November, 1919: "I am a Hun-hater. I live to hunt the Hun. I intend to do it all the days of my life."¹

It is hardly necessary to say that he is not representative of the just and merciful elements in British character—the fine idealism of Lord Robert Cecil, the broad-gauged patriotism of some of the great employers, the level-headed labour-leadership of Smillie, Hodges, Arthur Henderson, and Clynes, the sincere efforts in social reform of Government officials like Dr. Addison, and Sir Robert Horne.

But to appreciate the struggle of these men, it is necessary to know that there is an evil minority in the community who would push this kindlier order of society back into the jungle, if they could. "There are," as Lloyd George said a year ago, "wild men screaming through the keyholes."

Mr. Horatio Bottomley is representative of a strong and large element in any society. It is the mob as distinct from the democracy. We all have in us hate, revenge, fear, and grab. He appeals with emotional force to this brute streak. He appeals to Britain in its heavy mood—to the crowd of the public-house, the music-hall, the prize fight, the dog-fight, the horse-race, the professional football game, dirty humour, and the spirit of sport on its savage, gambling side. His spiritual allies are: the haters of the Irish, the commercial imperialists, the militarists, some of the daily press, much of the Sunday press, the *Morning Post* and the *Saturday Review*. He is the voice of the bitter, greedy, hate-elements in our common humanity.

On 19 April, 1919, Mr. Bottomley wrote in one of his publications:

The things which matter are (1) indemnities; (2) the punishment of the Kaiser, and (3) the future of the German colonies. I don't trouble myself about the League of Nations dream—that can wait. I am thinking of the ten thousand millions [sterling] which, in one way and another, the war has cost us, and the crimes and atrocities which, in obedience to his command to "emulate the example of Attila," the German soldiery have been guilty of, and of those territories contiguous to various parts of the British Empire which, before the war, were under the malignant sway of Germany. I wipe out, therefore, not only the League, but also the "Freedom of the Seas"—whatever that may mean—"economic boycotts," and all the rest of it. And whilst the Allies are groaning under the burden of war-debt and taxation, and Germany is either recovering herself—or concluding a Bolshevik bond with Russia and China—America is to "scoop the pool!"

Why have we an army on the Rhine—except to enforce our will upon the enemy? No! There must be no more talk—no more Little Tens and Big Fours—no more commissions.

¹ This hate is facile. It has at times been turned by mob-publicists against Serbia, France, Russia, America, Ireland, with the same force and phrases as those used against Germany.

What fools we have been! And all to oblige Mr. Wilson, who sat in his study, three thousand miles away from the battlefield, writing "Notes" and drafting "Points" whilst France and Britain and Belgium and Italy were being bled white! To paraphrase a well-known tag, "What fools we mortals be!"

As I have said, in the House of Commons and out of it, the British case has been too much influenced by the so-called idealism of President Wilson.

Mr. Bottomley's attacks on Americans are frequent. He is a prominent figure in Parliament. His ideal for his country is that of a more vindictive Prussia. He attacks all that is noble in England, and opposes the movement of the democracy. He speaks fluently with the swing of a music-hall monologist. With his facile and copious emotions, he has a real pity for the "hard luck" of the poor. He fights against slumland. He pours light on individual cases of injustice. He has ready tears for ruined girls, particularly when the story of their wrong will smack a little smuttily in the columns of his weekly.

He is as powerful and disintegrating and dangerous to the community as Mr. Hearst is in America. With the million circulation of his *John Bull*, his crowded meetings, and his speeches in Parliament, reported throughout Great Britain, he exercises a black magic on the mob consciousness. He is one of those lusty growths which only come to their perfect bloom in the climate of war. Safe from the slaughter, he cheers on "an adequate army of occupation—that's the stuff—and the only stuff—to give 'em." In that sadistic revel, which war is to this type of civilian, he rejoices in the spectacle of nations bleeding.

ARTHUR GLEASON.

LEO SHESTOV.

Leo Shestov is a contemporaneous Russian philosopher, about fifty-four years old, and almost unknown, to American readers. In his most recent volume, from which the following paragraphs are taken, he arranges his philosophy as Marcus Aurelius, Joubert, and Pascal arranged theirs, in the form of brief, unrelated, and aphoristic meditations.

THE comfortable, settled man says to himself: "How could one live without being sure of the morrow; how could one sleep without a roof over one's head?" But misfortune turns him out of house and home. He must perforce sleep under a hedge. He cannot rest, he is full of terrors. There may be wild beasts, fellow-tramps. But in the long run he will get used to it. He will trust himself to chance, live like a tramp, and sleep his sleep in a ditch.

To escape from the grasp of contemporary ruling ideas, one should study history. The lives of other men in other lands and in other ages teach us to realize that our "eternal laws" and infallible ideas are just abortions. Take a step further, imagine mankind living elsewhere than on this earth, and all our mundane eternal ideas lose their charm.

IN spite of Epicurus and his exasperation we are forced to admit that anything whatsoever may result from anything whatsoever. Which does not mean, however, that a stone ever turned into bread, or that our visible universe was ever "naturally" formed from nebulous puffs. But from our own minds and our own experience we can deduce nothing that would serve us as a ground for setting even the smallest limit to nature's own arbitrary behaviour. If whatever happens now had chanced to happen quite differently, it would not, therefore, have seemed any the less natural to us. In other words, although there may be an element of inevitability in our human judgments concerning the natural phenomena, we have never

been able and probably never shall be able to separate the grain of inevitable from the chaff of accidental and casual truth. Moreover, we do not even know which is more essential and important, the inevitable or the casual. Hence we are forced to the conclusion that philosophy must give up her attempt at finding the *veritates aeternæ*. The business of philosophy is to teach man to live in uncertainty—man who is supremely afraid of uncertainty, and who is forever hiding himself behind this or the other dogma. More briefly, the business of philosophy is not to reassure people, but to upset them.

WHEN man finds in himself a certain defect, of which he can by no means rid himself, there remains but to accept the so-called failing as a natural quality. The more grave and important the defect, the more urgent is the need to ennoble it. From great to ridiculous is only one step, and an ineradicable vice in strong men is always rechristened a virtue.

THE secret of Poushkin's "inner harmony."—To Poushkin nothing was hopeless. Nay, he saw hopeful signs in everything. It is agreeable to sin, and it is just as delightful to repent. It is good to doubt, but it is still better to believe. It is jolly "with feet shod in steel" to skate the ice, it is pleasant to wander about with gypsies, to pray in church, to quarrel with a friend, to make peace with an enemy, to swoon on waves of harmony, to weep over a passing fancy, to recall the past, to peep into the future. Poushkin could cry hot tears, and he who can weep can hope. "I want to live, so that I may think and suffer," he says; and it seems as if the word "to suffer," which is so beautiful in the poem, just fell in accidentally, because there was no better rhyme in Russian for "to die." The later verses, which are intended to amplify *to think and to suffer*, prove this. Poushkin might repeat the words of the ancient hero: "danger is dangerous to others, but not to me." Therein lies the secret of his harmonious moods.

To praise oneself is considered improper, immodest; to praise one's own sect, one's own philosophy, is considered the highest duty. Even the best writers have taken at least as much trouble to glorify their philosophy as to found it, and have always had more success in the former case than in the latter. Their ideas, whether proven or not, are the dearest possession in life to them, in sorrow a consolation, in difficulty a source of counsel. Even death is not terrible to ideas; they will follow man beyond the grave, they are the only imperishable riches. All this the philosophers repeat, very eloquently repeat and reiterate concerning their ideas, not less skilfully than advocates plead their cases on behalf of thieves and swindlers. But nobody has ever yet called a philosopher "a hired conscience," though everybody gives the lawyer this nickname. Why this partiality?

THE best, the most effective way of convincing a reader is to begin one's argument with inoffensive, commonplace assertions. When suspicion has been sufficiently lulled, and a certainty has been begot that what follows will be a confirmation of the reader's own accepted views—then has the moment arrived to speak one's mind openly, but still in the same easy tone, as if there were no break in the flow of truisms. The logical connection is unimportant. Consequence of manner and intonation is much more impressive than consequence of ideas. The thing to do is to go on, in the same suave tone, from uttering a series of banalities to expressing new and dangerous thought, without any break. If you succeed in this, the business is done. The reader will not forget—the new words will plague and torment him until he has accepted them.

Homo homini lupus—is one of the most steadfast maxims of eternal morality. In each of our neighbours we fear a wolf. "This fellow is evil-minded, if he is not restrained by law he will ruin us," so we think every time a man gets out of the rut of sanctified tradition. The

fear is just. We are so poor, so weak, so easily ruined and destroyed! How can we help being afraid! And yet, behind danger and menace there is usually hidden something significant, which merits our close and sympathetic attention. But fear's eyes are big. We see danger, danger only, we build up a fabric of morality inside which as in a fortress we sit out of danger all our lives. Only poets have undertaken to praise dangerous people—Don Juans, Fausts, Tannhäusers. But nobody takes the poets seriously. Common sense values a commercial traveller or a don much more highly than a Byron, a Goethe, or a Molière.

A WRITER works himself up to a pitch of ecstasy, otherwise he does not take up his pen. But ecstasy is not so easily distinguished from other kinds of excitement. And as a writer is always in haste to write, he has rarely the patience to wait, but at the first promptings of animation begins to pour himself forth. So in the name of ecstasy we are offered such quantities of banal, by no means ecstatic effusions. Particularly easy it is to confound with ecstasy that very common sort of spring-time liveliness which in our language is well-named calf-rapture. And calf-rapture is much more acceptable to the public than true inspiration or genuine transport. It is easier, more familiar.

WHILST conscience stands between the educated and the lower classes, as the only possible mediator, there can be no hope for mutual understanding. Conscience demands sacrifices, nothing but sacrifices. It says to the educated man: "You are happy, well-off, learned—the people are poor, unhappy, ignorant; renounce therefore your well-being, or else soothe your conscience with suave speeches." Only he who has nothing to sacrifice, nothing to lose, having lost everything, can hope to approach the people as an equal. This is why Dostoëvsky and Nietzsche were not afraid to speak in their own name, and did not feel compelled either to stretch up or to stoop down in order to be on a level with men.

FATALISM frightens people particularly in that form which holds it just to say of anything that happens, or has happened, or will happen, Be it so! How can one acquiesce in the actuality of life, when it contains so many horrors? But *amor fati* does not imply eternal acquiescence in actuality. It is only a truce, for a more or less lasting period. Time is needed in which to estimate the forces and intentions of the enemy. Under the mask of friendship the old enmity persists, and an awful revenge is in preparation.

THE THEATRE.

A BACK-DOOR TO BEAUTY.

THE so-called new stagecraft is neither a style nor a formula—it is a spirit; and they who worship it must worship it in spirit, or their product will be naught but freakishness. This spirit is one of respect for the imagination, and of passion for unity and beauty. It is a spirit which instinctively prefers the symbol to the literal statement because it finds a higher pleasure in the stimulated imagination than in the satisfied mind; and it instinctively employs costumes, scenery, lights, colours, not as aids or ornaments alone, but as things in themselves significant, knowing that beauty is illusive and strange. In the American theatre, there has been little enough of the new stagecraft—so little that it is still bewildering to many people. Some of our experimental theatres have bravely employed it, so far as they were able, and Arthur Hopkins, the manager who is now doing the work of leadership which Belasco did two decades ago, has employed Robert E. Jones to introduce into the so-called "commercial theatre" the modern spirit, the most notable

recent example being the production of "Richard III," with its grim, soaring London Tower, its uneasy throne, its beautiful colours and groupings, all working for a unity and totality of impression. The curious fact remains, however, that when the history of our generation in the American theatre comes to be written, it will probably show that the revolt from realism, the spirit of suggestion and imaginative beauty, gained its foothold on the stage through the medium of the lowly and despised "musical comedy."

Yet possibly this fact—if it be a fact—is not so curious as might at first appear. Serious drama, even when it is fantastic or poetic drama, has a firm foundation of reality, and since this is felt by the public, it is a slow process to wean the public from a desire to find a corresponding basis of realism in the settings and general stage arrangement. Indeed, stagecraft seriously errs when it tries—as the new craft sometimes does try—to abandon the literal statement in literal drama. In musical comedy, however, we are in a world so far removed from reality that a public with any flexibility of imagination is willing to accept the symbol for the bald statement, and willing to seek beauty other than in conventional terms. It was a shrewd realization of this which enabled Ziegfeld of the "Follies" to gain several jumps on his competitors by employing Urban as his stage decorator, and has enabled John Murray Anderson this spring to mount a musical entertainment at the Maxine Elliott Theatre without any scenery whatever, in the conventional sense—nothing but curtains, gauzes, towering screens, a tapestry, and the play of light. Since nothing happens in "What's In a Name" of coherent story, a new and welcome interest is found in the constant prick to the imagination to build a reality out of hints, to enjoy the peculiar beauty, found only in the theatre, and that too seldom, of colour, design, plastic grouping, music, speech, fused into an effect which has the living quality, the emotional tang of action, of human significance.

Much, to be sure, in "What's In a Name" is crude, incompletely realized, even downright ugly. But there is enough which is successful and beautiful in a new, almost a disturbing way, to make the production notable. Take, for example, the final scene—a great tapestry hung in a semicircle, a winding staircase, an oak chest, and nothing else. Yet here is the hall of an ancestral castle! Down the stairs trips Miss Rosalind Fuller (one of those three Fuller sisters who used to sing us the folk-songs of old England). She takes from the chest a bridal veil, an ancestral bridal veil, and sings her wondering dream of those who have worn it before her; then down the winding stairs they come, bridesmaids and brides of the generations gone, in their strange costumes, all shimmering white against the dull tapestry. Earlier in the play Miss Fuller sings, a commonplace song enough, about a shepherd and shepherdess on a music box, and the curtains part to show a pink shepherd and shepherdess revolving on their tinkling box against a towering cloth of yellow—yellow gained by the play of light. Yellow are the little ballet dancers who come in on their toes, in the puffy skirts of tradition—gold-yellow and Dresden-pink. It is all in a light that never was on sea or land; but neither sea nor land is here, only, as it were, the dainty soul of the ancient ballet not crushed by crude realities but floated as pure picture against a yellow haze. For such a moment as this, for so unique and lovely a sensation, one would gladly sit through the inanities of far more inane musical entertainments than "What's In a Name."

Curious, too, is the sensation of watching the "trick pianist" perform on the fore-stage, while the next full set is being made ready, or the chorus are changing into other and yet more startling gowns. The "trick pianist" and his ilk, long ago taken over from vaudeville into our musical entertainments, usually perform either in a shallow set or in front of a painted drop depicting the Plaza or the corner of Forty-second Street. Not so in this case. The poor fellow finds himself in front of a sombre curtain of gray and black, hanging in funereal folds, and he himself is bathed not in amber from the footlights, but in pure white light from above. The intensification of concentration on the performer is enormous. A slip now is as obvious and fatal as in playing a Mozart sonata. There has been both concentration and simplification. Woe to the performer whose technique is not equal to the demand!

There is one more feature in the staging of "What's In a Name" that is significant. The following week Maurice Browne produced the "Medea" of Euripides at the Garrick, in the new manner. Now Mr. Browne is doubtless far more intelligently versed in imaginative stagecraft than Mr. Anderson, and was assuredly working with vastly superior material. Yet the purveyor of musical comedy excelled him in one respect so strikingly that the dullest could not fail to note. Where the Euripidean players fell into set poses in order to be "pictorial," killing the illusion of reality in the effort at plastic beauty, the musical comedy folk danced and sang and went about their usual business and achieved plastic beauty without strain. This may only mean that the task of unification of effects is more difficult in serious drama than in fantastic reviews, or it may mean that by being less self-conscious the musical comedy stage-managers are by way of achieving unity where better men fail. At any rate, the fact is there, for speculation. And it is only one of many arousing stimuli to be found in "What's In a Name." Some day a musician worthy of the new stagecraft will appear, and with his potent aid perhaps a wholly new type of lyric drama will result, a thing of goblin humour and strange loveliness. It shapes vaguely in your mind already, as you watch.

WALTER PRICHARD EATON.

MISCELLANY.

THE last mail from England brought me an informing letter from a friend who is in close touch with men and events on both sides of the Channel. He writes:

There is more anti-American feeling in France than there is here; the egregious Horatio Bottomley does not in the least represent the general body of English opinion and his influence is definitely on the wane, in spite of the victory of his candidate in the recent by-election in Shropshire, which was due to the women voters, and was the result of their disgust with the Coalition. The women at present are making even greater fools of themselves in politics than are the men; they can be caught by anybody, as the great majority have no political opinions and take no trouble to inform themselves. They are hastening the end of parliamentary government. Bottomley's influence is almost entirely on the women; it was they, of course, who wanted to hang the Kaiser at the general election. In France, I hear, the Nationalists are very bitter against America, and against President Wilson in particular. Here in England it is the Left that is disgusted with Wilson. As for the Treaty, it would be much better if America did back out of the whole thing. Why should you mix yourselves up in the horrible mess that has been made of Europe? Of course Wilson shares with the others the responsibility for that mess. A good many of us over here would like to see America refuse to have anything to do with the Treaty or with the League of Nations and then convoke an international con-

ference of all the Powers, including our late enemies and all the neutrals, to make a new settlement and found a genuine League. That is a policy that might even yet save Europe and the world. By the way, what is really the matter with Wilson? He could have got anything he pleased in 1917; France would have made peace if America had not come in. I for one, wish that America had not come in—and I am by no means the only Englishman who thinks that it would have been much better not to have had a victory. Wilson apparently saw that once; how could he have been so stupid as to change his mind? He ought to have proposed at Versailles that America should give financial aid to Europe, except England, on conditions. He could then have got anything he wanted, but I suppose the American financiers wouldn't let him. Even now an offer of financial aid would go far to save the situation. But I hope that America will not give another penny to Europe without very stringent conditions. I cannot understand why Wilson, who had in his hands the trump card, the economic one, did not play it.

My correspondent adds significantly: "One thing is certain in all this 'foul welter of our controversies'—to use Carlyle's term—confidence in representative institutions is being undermined everywhere; both in France and in England. How is it in America?"

I OFTEN think that the worst thing about the policy of repression is that it sometimes works. If it turns out, as now appears most likely, that Leonard Wood is chosen to be Commanding-General of the Grand Old Party in the coming campaign, very few persons of radical mind will be disposed to vote for him; and yet no end of radicals have already admitted that they would like to see the General elected. The reason is this: they believe that the shortest road to revolution lies through repression, and, as they see it, General Wood brings with him more of the history and the promise of repression than any other candidate can offer. Granting the second proposition without argument, one feels that the soundness of the major premise is at least open to debate. The indifference and even approval with which a great mass of Americans have looked upon the denial of the old liberties of free speech, free press, and free assembly, and upon the business of repression in general, is perhaps an indication of the temper of the country. One does not have to take a straw vote of the citizenry to discover that Mr. Palmer at his worst has more supporters than Mr. Debs at his best; nor is any long argument necessary to prove that martyrdom for a political or economic creed no longer makes its old romantic appeal to the people of these United States.

EVEN if one were sure that new martyrdoms would arouse wide sympathy—if one were positive that repression would be counter-weighted by rebellion—this would mean the transfer of the whole argument into the realm of emotional fanaticism; an eventuality from which the country may perhaps escape, if only we can gradually live down our war-time fervours. Coming back to the beginning, one often feels that the very worst thing about repression is that it sometimes works. If it does not achieve its direct object of crushing the country into the mould of conservatism, the kind of opposition it arouses is likely to be as unreasoned and fanatical as repression itself. If the future lies neither with Mr. Palmer nor with the soap-boxers, then General Wood is perhaps the most dangerous candidate now before the public; for he certainly serves the interests of one sort of fanaticism, and by serving them is likely to serve effectively the interests of another sort also.

How is it that the reactionaries in this country are content with such poverty-stricken intellectual defence? I have been reading some editorials lately in their representative press, and am overcome with wonder and regret. There is a great deal to be said for the old order; I do not want to be the one to say it, but it is to be said, and should be said with clearness, precision and conviction. Conservatism in England has had a long line of

able and distinguished apologists; any one who entered the ring with one of them had a glorious fight on his hands. Think of the kind of thing that William H. Mallock used to write, for instance, and compare it with what is done by publicity-men here. Just that, I believe, is the trouble; it is done by publicity-men. As a measure of self-respect, it seems to me that the reactionary element ought to make a place for at least one really able paper—say a weekly, more or less like the London *Spectator*. It would be a godsend to give the radicals something to sharpen their teeth on, and the liberals might be forced to tighten up on a deal of loose thinking and looser writing.

THERE is evidence of a strong, organized movement to secure nation-wide uniformity of divorce-law. It behooves such of our people as do not wish to see the country wholly given over to the peculiar idolatries of fanaticism, to wake up to what this powerful organization is about; otherwise we shall probably see another such crusade as foisted on us the execrable Eighteenth Amendment. There are those who regard divorce as a religious or religio-moral issue, and they are now quite free to regulate their own lives according to their opinion. There are others, quite as conscientious, who do not so regard it; and it seems intolerable and impracticable that the first class should seek a legal sanction to coerce the second. The country is struggling with quite enough of that sort of thing for the time being; better to go a little slowly and see how it digests what it has already bitten off. At present, a survey of the United States would incline one to agree with Remy de Gourmont that *quand la morale triomphe, il se passe des choses très-vilaines*. Let us set about this new effort to moralize our population by force of law, a little warily.

Poor old Japan! What a nice Occidental life the folks in that land of flowers and fans are leading! How happy and easy and thoroughly at home one feels, when one reads about secret diplomacy, military control of the Department of Foreign Affairs, faked telegrams fathered by the propaganda of the War Department, and sundry like practices! One learns also from the Japanese press of the failure of military force to break the Chinese boycott; also of bitter disagreement between the military and the Foreign Office. A resolution recently presented to the Diet demanded the establishment of a Foreign Relations Committee for the purpose of making investigations into the proceedings at the Peace Conference, the peace-treaty, etc. The public has given the resolution enthusiastic support, but the Government strongly opposes it. Most of the newspapers are clamouring for open diplomacy, control of the military, and the truth about affairs in China and Siberia. It is the same old story of increasing popular distrust of parliamentary institutions.

JOURNEYMAN.

POETRY.

JOHN KEATS.

Dear boy, I should have liked to be your friend,
To be your friend and count me one of those
Gay comrades of your undisheartened days;
To go with you some indolent April's close
To tramp the wide heath over, windy ways
Alive with larks and linnets; with you stand
On a little hill, the west a kindled rose,
And watch our afternoon come to an end.
You would not need to urge me much, I fear,
To share your candle-light, your grateful blaze
And hear you read with tranquil voice and clear
From some old book outspread upon your knee
Immortal words that you had long found dear,
And yearned, beloved friend, to leave with me.

BERNARD RAYMUND.

BOOKS.

L'ENFANT TERRIBLE.

THE literature of the war is not likely to produce a book that will cause more rueful reflection than this work of Lord Fisher, Admiral of the British Fleet.¹ Its title is apparently a studied commonplace, but bears a singular appropriateness, for these "Memories" of Lord Fisher will awaken in the minds of his readers thoughts which will not be medicined to sleep for many a long day. The style of the work is racy and entertaining. Its tone and screamer typography, in fact, probably give convenient ground for English reviews, especially liberal reviews, to shirk the book as *infra dig.* and to avoid serious discussion of its statements and implications. Many, no doubt, will quarrel with him for telling the truth at this time, and permitting his work to come out so close upon the heels of all the romanticist propaganda of the Allies. It has already been said that it would have been more patriotic to have left the work to be published after his death; and this opinion may be as convenient as any for those short-sighted British patriots who were the bane of Lord Fisher's official existence. Others can be quite content with the abundant reasons which he adduces for publishing the book at this time:

My reluctance to this book being published before my death is increasingly definite; but I have put my hand to the plough, because of the overbearing argument that I cannot resist, that I shall be helping to

(a) Avoid national bankruptcy.

(b) Avert the insanity and wickedness of building a Navy against the United States.

(c) Establish a union with America, as advocated by John Bright and Mr. Roosevelt.

(d) Enable the United States and British Navies to say to all other Navies "If you build more, we will fight you, here and now. We'll 'Copenhagen' you, without remorse."

These reasons are respectable enough; and they should find some indulgence, at least from the militarists in this country.

Lord Fisher takes us back to the close of the Boer War when he was commander-in-chief of the naval station at Portsmouth; and in a series of letters written for the most part to Lord Esher, friend and confidant of King Edward VII., lays before us a chronological review of the last phase of naval development in Europe. In a letter to King Edward, written by Fisher in 1907, we learn that Germany "has been paralyzed by the Dreadnought."

Now this is the truth: England has seven "Dreadnoughts" and three "Dreadnought" Battle Cruisers (which last three ships are, in my opinion, far better than "Dreadnoughts"); total, ten "Dreadnoughts" built and building, while Germany, in March last, had not begun even one "Dreadnought." It is doubtful if, even so late as May last, a German "Dreadnought" had been commenced. . . . As stated in an Admiralty official document, dated August 22nd, 1907: "We have 123 Destroyers and 40 Submarines. The Germans have 48 Destroyers and 1 Submarine." . . . Admiral Tirpitz, the German Minister of Marine, has just stated, in a secret official document, that the English Navy is now four times stronger than the German Navy. Yes, that is so, and we are going to keep the British Navy at that strength, *vide* ten "Dreadnoughts" built and building and not one German "Dreadnought" commenced last May. But we don't want to parade all this to the world at large. . . .

Lord Fisher was then quite satisfied that "the only thing in the world that Great Britain has to fear is Germany and none else," and from that time on, he pursued, with indefatigable energy, his policy of dealing Germany a mortal blow while she was unprepared.

It seemed to him "simply a sagacious act on England's part to seize the German fleet when it was so very easy of accomplishment in the manner I sketched out to His Majesty." Fisher thought it could be done without bloodshed.

Fisher, besides, had other plans that did not commend themselves to the politicians in office; and one which had been whispered in the "inner ring" is now substantiated with extraordinary candour by its co-author, namely, the plan of landing 100,000 men in Schleswig-Holstein. It will be remembered by those who were familiar with some of the machinations of M. Isvolsky, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, and M. Delcassé, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, that the latter diplomatist openly boasted of the assured co-operation of the British navy and army in his scheme of attacking Germany. In *Le Gaulois*, 12 July, 1905, M. Delcassé, shortly after his downfall, said:

Of what importance would the young navy of Germany be in the event of war in which England, I tell you, would assuredly be with us against Germany? What would become of Germany's ports or her trade, or her mercantile marine? They would be annihilated. That is what would be the significance of the visit, prepared and calculated, of the British squadron to Brest, while the return visit of the French squadron to Portsmouth will complete the demonstration. The *entente* between the two countries and the coalition of their navies, constitutes such a formidable machine of naval war that neither Germany, nor any other Power, would dare to face such an overwhelming force at sea.

The sensation caused by the pronouncement of M. Delcassé affected every chancellery in Europe. Mr. Broderick, the British War Minister, was forced to deny the report thus:

There could be no personal feelings between the Government of this country and Germany. . . . All the suggestions of misunderstandings might be put aside with those stories which had commended themselves to some minds, of plans for an irruption of 100,000 soldiers into Schleswig-Holstein, or of unexpected and entirely gratuitous attacks.

Notwithstanding these depreciations and denials, Lord Esher raised the question in a letter to Fisher:

. . . In January, 1906, King Edward sent me to see Mr. Beit, who had been recently received by the German Emperor at Potsdam. The Emperor said to Beit that "England wanted war: not the King—not, perhaps, the Government: but influential people like Sir John Fisher." He said Fisher held that because the British Fleet was not ready, England should provoke war. . . . Fisher can, no doubt, land 100,000 men in Schleswig-Holstein—it would not be difficult—and the British Navy has reconnoitred the coast of Denmark with this object during the cruise of the Fleet. . . .

And Lord Fisher provides the further information that the actual goal of his neighbourly enterprise "was not Schleswig-Holstein; that was only a feint to be turned into a reality against the Kiel Canal if things went well. No, the real spot was the Pomeranian coast, under a hundred miles from Berlin, where the Russian army landed in the time of Frederick the Great."

No end of intelligent people in the British Isles and elsewhere have been utterly unable to get it through their heads why a section of the German press, from 1905 to the spring of 1914, should pour out a steady stream of jingo malevolence against Britain, when all the time the speeches of the British ministers breathed the air of elevated and pacific Cobdenism. No wonder. But Fisher's revelations of what was really going on, and particularly of his own activity behind the closed doors of a bureaucracy, clear up the incongruity. His correspondence with Lord Esher gives the detailed story of the plan for crushing Germany. The method, all the plans down, even, to the time for attack, originated in the brain of Lord Fisher; and he is undeniably proud of his scheme. Here we find the

¹ "Memories and Records" by Lord Fisher. New York: George H. Doran Company.

business of preparedness *in excelsis*. No work of any German writer can compare with this for thoroughness and enthusiasm. For ten years Lord Fisher prepared for the great task, ably assisted during the last three years of the period by Mr. Winston Churchill:

... Mr. Winston Churchill was in close association with these drastic reforms, and gave Lord Fisher all his sympathy when hostile criticism was both malignant and perilous. For this reason, on Mr. Churchill's advent as First Lord of the Admiralty in the autumn of 1911, Lord Fisher most gladly complied with his request to return home from Italy to help him to proceed with that great task that had previously occupied Lord Fisher for six years as First Sea Lord, namely, the preparation for a German War which Lord Fisher had predicted in 1905 would certainly occur in August, 1914, in a written memorandum, and afterwards also personally to Sir M. Hankey, the Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence. . . .

Lord Fisher's plan was complete down to the very date. "We'll stagger humanity," as old Kruger said!, Fisher wrote to Lord Esher, 4 December, 1903. The plural refers to what he called "the dauntless three": Esher, president of the Committee of Defence, Sir George Clark, and Fisher himself. About a year later he is somewhat distressed about the trouble of getting the right men as members of the new Army Council, and he writes:

... If we don't get in men who will enthusiastically adopt our scheme, and work with us, let us throw up at once! as we shall only have an awful fiasco and I (for one) don't want to go down with my grey hairs to the grave sorrowing and discredited! Therefore I suggest to you that we should agree on our men and run them at once!

The "dauntless three" were successful in getting the men that supported their scheme on the Army Council, but it was not all plain sailing even then, for when our author became First Sea Lord of the Admiralty, the secret leaked out, and had reached the ears of the German Emperor, though nothing of it seems to have reached the House of Commons:

... In regard to the "Invasion Bogey" about which I am now writing to you, how curious it is that from the German Emperor downwards their hearts were stricken with fear that we were going to attack them. . . .

We learn this from a letter dated 7 October, 1907, but we do not know when the German Emperor heard for the first time of the plan. That the news had leaked out in no way deterred Lord Fisher; for, later on, he writes as if he were concerned chiefly with keeping his secret from the House of Commons and the British public, and says, "The whole case of Lord Roberts rests on an absolute naval surprise, which is really a sheer impossibility in view of our organized information." About that time Winston Churchill promised he would "get six men on both sides [of the House of Commons] to join in *con amore*." Then the plan, known to the German Emperor, was to be kept secret from the Defence Committee:

... I don't want to disclose my plan of campaign to anyone, not even C.-B. [Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the Prime Minister] himself. The only man who knows is Sir Arthur Wilson, and he's as close as wax! The whole success will depend upon *suddenness and unexpectedness*, and the moment I tell anyone, there's an end to both!!! So just please keep me clear of any Conference and personally I would sooner the Defence Committee kept *still*. . . .

Why he should thus fear the British Government and the British public is an interesting question. He had been successful in obtaining the support of some of the most important members of the Cabinet who were publicly ranged on the side of pacifism—McKenna, Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, and others. It seems significant that he should have feared

Campbell-Bannerman and the rank and file of the Liberal party. Germany was scared, however; and well she might be, for "in May 1907 England had seven Dreadnoughts ready for battle and Germany had not one," besides, "England had flotillas of submarines peculiarly adapted to the shallower German waters, when Germany had none." A few months later Lord Fisher sent the following to Lord Esher:

... Secret. Tirpitz asked a mutual civilian friend living in Berlin to enquire very privately of me whether I would agree to limiting size of guns and size of ships, as this is *vital* to the Germans, who *can't go bigger* than the Dreadnought in guns or size. I wrote back by return of post yesterday morning "Tell him I'll see him d—d first!" (*Them's the very words!*) I wonder what Wilhelm will say to that if Tirpitz shows him the letter!

We have now reached a point in the story of Lord Fisher's preparedness-scheme when it might be well for us to get a very clear idea of the policy of the British Government as publicly expressed by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and later by Mr. Asquith. When the former was made Prime Minister he said in the opening speech of the general election (which took place in January, 1906):

[Our policy] will be opposed to aggression and to adventure, it will be animated by a desire to be on the best terms with all nationalities, and to co-operate with them in the common work of civilization. . . . Remember that we are spending at this moment, I think, twice as much on the army and navy as we spent ten years ago. . . . I hold that the growth of armaments is a great danger to the peace of the world. A policy of huge armaments keeps alive and stimulates and feeds the belief that force is the best, if not the only, solution of international differences. It is a policy that tends to inflame old sores and to create new sores. . . .

The new Prime Minister immediately set to work to reduce the expenditure on armaments, a task of extreme difficulty, for the opposition was great. The reduction was a signal for a jingo panic over naval armament, which raged for many months in 1908. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman died in April of that year, and Mr. Asquith was appointed in his place. It was in January, 1908, that Mr. Winston Churchill proffered his assistance to Fisher; yet seven months later it was the same Mr. Churchill who said:

I think it is greatly to be deprecated that persons should try to spread the belief in this country that war between Great Britain and Germany is inevitable. It is all nonsense. In the first place, the alarmists have no grounds whatever for their panic or fear. . . . I have come here this afternoon to ask you to join with me in saying that far and wide throughout the masses of the British dominions there is no feeling of ill-will towards Germany. I say we honour that strong, patient, industrious German people, who have been for so many centuries divided, a prey to European intrigue and a drudge amongst the nations of the Continent. . . .

The prospective First Lord of the Admiralty was at that time hailed by the Liberal electors as a pacifist; his speeches were quite in accordance with the best liberal tradition. Nevertheless, the bitterness between the two countries was not allayed by his public utterances. Naturally, perhaps, the jingo section of the German press could not reconcile such pacific speeches with the actual proportions in the growth of European naval armaments. For on 1 April, 1908, before the German naval law was amended for the second time, the navies of Britain, France and Germany stood as follows:

	Battleships	Cruisers	Destroyers
Great Britain	57	34	142
France	21	19	48
Germany	22	8	61

Again, so that we may thoroughly understand what follows in Lord Fisher's letters to Lord Esher, we must glance at the official figures for new naval construction, from 1909 to 1914, of the four great Powers of Europe:

	Great Britain	France	Russia	Germany
1909.....	£11,076,551	£4,517,766	£1,758,487	£10,177,062
1910.....	14,755,289	4,977,682	1,424,013	11,392,856
1911.....	15,148,171	5,876,659	3,216,396	11,710,859
1912.....	16,132,558	7,114,876	6,897,580	11,491,187
1913.....	16,883,875	8,893,064	12,082,516	11,010,883
1914.....	18,676,080	11,772,862	13,098,613	10,316,264

The new construction expenditure in the estimates for 1914 of the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente was as follows:

Triple Alliance		Triple Entente	
Germany	£10,316,264	Great Britain.....	£18,676,080
Austria	4,051,976	France	11,772,862
Italy	3,237,000	Russia	13,098,613
Total £17,605,240		Total £43,547,555	

From the time that Mr. Asquith became Prime Minister the bitterness increased between the chauvinists of both countries, Great Britain and Germany, though the public utterances of ministers were, in the main, pacific.

After the naval scare and panic of 1909 the Foreign Minister, Sir Edward Grey, in a debate in the House of Commons, entered an apology for the Government's naval activities which had caused so much ill-feeling at home and abroad:

... The First Lord has had a very difficult task. He has had to stand against panic and scare, notably in the election before last, greatly fomented by the calculations made by the right honourable gentleman [Mr. Balfour] which, when the calculations proved to be mistaken, disappeared. ... Our navy estimates for 1909 are said to have given provocation. They have not given rise to increased naval expenditure in Germany, or, I believe, in any other country. The last addition to the German naval programme was settled by law in 1908.

It is easy now to understand why Lord Welby, who was at the head of the British Treasury, then delivered his famous protest:

We are in the hands of an organization of crooks. They are politicians, generals, manufacturers of armaments, and journalists. All of them are anxious for unlimited expenditure, and go on inventing scares to terrify the public and to terrify Ministers of the Crown.

We may now resume the story told by Lord Fisher in his letters. The date is 5 May, 1908, just after the death of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. Mr. McKenna is First Lord of the Admiralty, and Mr. Lloyd George is Chancellor of the Exchequer; both were regarded by their supporters as ardent free-traders and downright pacifists:

... Yesterday, with all Sea Lords present, McKenna formally agreed to 4 Dreadnoughts and if necessary 6 Dreadnoughts next year (perhaps the greatest triumph ever known!) ... Let Lloyd George reassure McKenna and tell him to have no fear—it doesn't affect next year, as McKenna consents to 4 or even 6; but it does affect the year after, and the Admiralty Finance should be arranged accordingly and not deplete next year at the expense of the year after. ...

No time was lost after the formation of the new Government. All parties to Lord Fisher's scheme were rapidly drawn into full co-operation. This note on Russia is particularly illuminating:

... I sat several times [on a recent visit abroad] between Stolypin, the Russian Prime Minister, and Isvolsky, the Foreign Secretary. I didn't begin it, but Stolypin said to me 'What do you think we want most?' He fancied I should answer 'So many battleships, so many cruisers, etc., etc.', but instead I said: 'Your Western Frontier is denuded of troops and your magazines are depleted. Fill them up, and then talk of Fleets!' ...

The sagacity of those distinguished Frenchmen, Messrs. Rousseau and Hanotaux, in understanding Mahan's phrase, "that 88 per cent. of the English guns were trained on Germany!" was particularly pleasing to Lord Fisher. The possibility of a raid on the English coast by the Germans was held by him to be not feasible:

... we have our wireless on top of Admiralty Building and are communicating with the Scilly Islands now and shortly I hope Gibraltar and so certainly to every point of the German coast where we shall have Wireless Cruisers all over the place. (*Not a dog will wag its tail without being reported.*) So don't let us get a scare over 24,000 men coming unobserved. ... The Admiralty hear (by wireless every moment) what all the Admirals and Captains are saying to each other anywhere in Europe and even over to the coasts of America.

In connection with the controversy which has been so often raised since hostilities began, as to the pledge given by the British government to send an expeditionary force to assist France, it is interesting to learn from Lord Fisher, (15 March, 1909):

... I have been studying one of these [expeditions] of inestimable value only involving 5,000 men, and some guns, and horses about 500—a mere fleabite! but a collection of these fleabites would make Wilhelm scratch himself with fury! However, the point of my letter is this—Ain't we d—d fools to go on wasting our very precious moments in these abstruse disquisitions on this line and that, or the passage of the Dutch-German Frontier River and whether the bloody fight is to be at Rheims or Amiens, until the Cabinet have decided the great big question raised in your E. 5: *Are we or are we not going to send a British Army to fight on the Continent as quite distinct and apart from Coastal Raids and seizures of Islands, etcetera, which the Navy dominate?* Had not the Prime Minister better get this fixed up before we have any more discussions such as foreshadowed to-morrow?

The German development of oil-engines and internal combustion brought forth the following outburst in the summer of 1910:

Oil Engines and internal combustion about which I so dilated at our dinner and bored you. Since that night (July 11th) Bloom & Voss in Germany have received an order to build a Motor Liner for the Atlantic Trade. *No engineers, no stokers, and no funnels, no boilers! Only a d—d chauffeur! The economy prodigious!* as the Germans say 'Kolossal billig!' But what will it be for War? *Why! all the past pales before the prospect!!!* I say to McKenna: 'Shove 'em over the precipice! Shove!'

The Agadir crisis of the summer of 1911 made the heart of Lord Fisher rejoice, for it came when the "quite natural tendency to ease down our naval endeavours" threatened his plan. Of Great Britain he writes:

'The Greatest Power on 'Arith', as Mr. Champ Clark would say! (You ought to meet Champ Clark.) He is likely to succeed Taft as President, *but I put my money on Woodrow Wilson.* ... He is Bismarck and Moltke rolled into one. ...'

After the Agadir crisis had subsided, he writes a long letter on 20 September, 1911, to Lord Esher which is full of interesting information:

... I happen to know in a curious way (but quite certainly) that the Germans are in a blue funk of the British Navy and are quite assured that 942 German merchant steamers would be 'gobbled up' in the first 48 hours of war, and also the d—d uncertainty of *when* and *where* a hundred thousand troops embarked in transports and kept 'in the air' might land! N. B.—There's a lovely spot only 90 miles from Berlin!

In December, 1911, there is the least likelihood war. "England is far too strong." Lord Fisher is certain that "Jellicoe will be Admiralissimo when Armageddon comes along, and *everything that was done revolved round that, and no one has seen it.*" In March 1912, four months after Sir John French, accompanied by four officers, had landed at Calais *en route* to the French headquarters, a visit concerning joint military action, one learns something of German feeling toward England, and somehow it does not occasion the reader of these "Memories" the surprise that the indefatigable propagandists have kept insisting that it should:

... It is bitterly intense and widespread. . . a German Admiral of high repute wrote confidentially and privately a few days since: 'German public opinion is roused in a way that I had not before thought possible.'

It is strange that he should have had any qualms about the propriety of his utterances as to making war damnable:

... Perhaps I went a little too far when I said I would boil the prisoners in oil and murder the innocent in cold blood, etc., etc. . . but it's quite silly not to make War damnable to the whole mass of your enemy's population, which of course is the secret of maintaining the right of Capture of Private Property at Sea. As you say, it must be proclaimed in the most public and most authoritative manner that direct and indirect trade between Great Britain, including every part of the British Empire, and Germany must cease in time of war. . . When war does come 'Might is Right' and the Admiralty will know what to do! . . .

Oil, in several respects, was a perturbing influence, in Lord Fisher's mind:

... Owing to our apathy during the last two years they (the Germans) are ahead with internal combustion engines! They have killed 15 men in experiments with oil engines and we have not killed one! And a d—d fool of an English politician told me the other day that he thinks this creditable to us!

Without any doubt (I have it from an eye-witness of part of the machinery for her at Nuremberg) a big German oil engine Cruiser is under weigh! We must press forward . . . These d—d politics are barring the way . . . 'What!' (say these trembling idiots) 'Another Dreadnought Revolution!' and these boneless fools chatter with fear like apes when they see an elephant! . . . We shall have 16 British Dreadnoughts with the 13½-inch gun before the Germans have one!!! So it will be with the 'Non-Pareil'! We have got to have her.

The rest is silence, or mere social tittle-tattle, interesting enough in its way, but falling rather flat after Lord Fisher's recital of the stirring progress of his mighty plan. No moral need be drawn, except perhaps the rather obvious and threadbare one, that the ways of governments and bureaucrats are quite the same the world over. One might, however, draw the attention of all those who are interested in a policy of preparedness to Lord Fisher's story of as aggressive and complete a plan as was ever devised by militarists. They may make what comparisons they please with what they know of the Prussian cult's full-blooded ruthlessness—which has surely not been understood by the romanticists of propaganda. After Fisher, the deluge. Prussian militarists may now be estimated at their true worth; really, by comparison, they barely hold their own. It is refreshing, however, after all the hate-myths, to see that the freemasonry of their common trade caused Fisher to hold some of them in affectionate admiration. Tirpitz, for example, remained all through the work of preparation, all through the war, his "dear old friend." A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind; and hence, when the Admiral of the British Fleet heard of the dismissal of von Tirpitz, he sent him the following sympathetic letter:

"Dear Old Tirps,

We are both in the same boat! What a time we've been colleagues, old boy! However, we did you in the eye over the Battle Cruisers and I know you've said you'll never forgive me for it when bang went the 'Blücher' and von Spee and all his host!

Cheer up, old chap! Say 'Resurgam'! You're the one German sailor who understands War! Kill your enemy without being killed yourself. I don't blame you for the submarine business. I'd have done the same myself, only our idiots in England wouldn't believe it when I told 'em!

Well! So long!

Yours till hell freezes,

Fisher.

This letter is dated 29 March, 1916. There will, no doubt, be numbers of worthy Americans who will feel sorry for the "idiots in England."

CHESTERTON'S BOOK OF ERSE

IN his latest book, "Irish Impressions," (John Lane) Mr. G. K. Chesterton says that his life is passed in making bad jokes and seeing them turn into true prophecies. As it applies to his previous books, this statement is wholly untrue. He has spent his life in making excellent jokes and seeing them turn into bad prophecies. But in the case of "Irish Impressions" it is half true: this time he makes excellent jokes and, God willing, will live to see them turn into true prophecies.

One turns to a book on the Irish Question by Chesterton as an approach to Chesterton rather than as an approach to the Irish Question. To anyone beset with a burning anxiety for Ireland, a discussion of the nice distinction between tweedle-dee and tweedle-dum under the guise of a title that indicates a discussion of Ireland is infuriating. And in the past, Chesterton has been the attorney of record for both Messrs. Dee and Dum. He has also favoured the theological in preference to the logical disputation, just as in sociological matters he has invariably failed to see the physical because of an infatuation to play hide and seek in the metaphysical. Living in a verbal house of trick walls and trap doors, he has not been able to throw stones that were philosophically effective. His booms have invariably been boomerangs.

But he sees the Irish Question clearly. If he never proceeds in a straight line on any philosophical proposition, he assuredly does on this. In the first place, "Irish Impressions" was not written for the sake of "a good show." Chesterton is a sternly honest man in spite of what his friends may say about him. He does not care a fig for one outraged person but he takes on terribly at the contemplation of one million outraged persons—or, as in the case of the Irish, four million. When he went to Ireland during the later months of the war, it was for the purpose of fraternizing with a people, but he remained to fraternize with a question. And of all men Chesterton is the one to share a bottle of Burgundy with an abstraction. In the glow of an inn-hearth he saw the figure of Young Ireland—of the one peasant in all the world who talks like a poet. The figure sat down and I have no doubt there was a call for another glass. There before him was the soul of the last Christian—and the first; the soul that was perplexed because of its own sins and not because of other people's. There before him was a spirit untouched by Calvin, but a spirit whose flesh has been tormented by what Protestants are pleased to call Progress.

The Irish Question, Chesterton says, is in reality the English Question. But in sterner reality it is the Protestant Question. Indeed, it is the Protestant period, for the matter ends there. It is the failure of Calvinism to flower in Elfland after it had shot up in England. In the scheme of Progress as understood by Calvinism there is no use for elfs. Did anyone ever see an elf in Belfast or in Glasgow? Elfes are the troubadours of Fancy. And Fancy was marked "Terra Incognita" by the Genevan map-makers.

But Progress, as defined by Protestantism, is a very definite thing. It is intolerant of the spirit of the individual when that spirit rebels against a mass movement. It is not so much the religion of the Holy Roller as it is the religion of the Steam Roller. The one inexplicable phenomenon of human history is that it should have been concomitant with democracy. It is the perfect agency of absolutism. And here I do not mean the absolutism of faith but of conduct. It is the blessing of a Belfast today as it was of a Berlin yesterday. It is the religion of an Ulsterman just as it was the religion of an Uhlan.

The Irish Question is the Protestant Question. It is a question not of leaving a people to their dreams and their fancies, to their cherished sentiments about a thing called Nationalism, to their almost sullen individualism (although these would be enough); it is a question of fastening on the soul of a people a faith that manifestly can never be made to fit. It is a Protestant Crusade—a crusade of commerce and dominion. Its very course westward is a confession of its error. And a confession of

its character. Men have never sung out rapturously, drunk with the joy of life, moving toward the west.

The Irish Question is a clash in Christianities and not one of practical politics. It is the last defence of colourful Christianity as it looks eastward toward the old Jerusalem against the onslaught of modern, drab Christianity as it looks westward toward the new Jerusalem. And it is a struggle in which one inevitably takes sides. If you are not for Irish freedom it is because you are for modern Calvinism and wish to see Manchester inflicted on mankind.

PHILIP GOODMAN.

AN HEIR OF PATRICK HENRY.

THE great interest of biography is that it unlocks the laboratory in which, out of innumerable elements, a character and a point of view have been forged, that it reveals to us the infinitely involved complex of appetites, inhibitions, aspirations, habits, opinions, idiosyncracies that go to make a life. We want to know, as Taine said, what time a man gets up in the morning and what he has for breakfast; we want his gossip, his unconsidered asides, we want a thousand and one minutiae that betray the subterranean being. But biography of this kind requires a detachment, a purely intellectual flair such as hardly exist in this country. The conditions of our life tend to produce generalized characters: our literature reproduces them and perpetuates them.

To Mr. David Karsner, for example, Eugene V. Debs is simply, on the one hand, the incarnation of a cause and, on the other, an object of devotion.¹ At first one is annoyed by this, one feels cheated by what seems the deliberate omission of psychological data. Then one realizes that the biographer is not greatly to blame. A detached attitude would certainly have modified his judgments: it would not have turned Debs from a type into an individual.

The vividest impression these pages leave on one's mind is of the simplicity, the almost exclusively emotional character not only of Debs himself but of the whole American Socialist movement. Socialism has had a different character in every country: what distinguishes the American brand in those earlier stages with which Debs will always be associated, is a certain innocence of spirit, a certain rustic, evangelical fervour like that of some old-fashioned Methodist sect. It has had no poets, it has had no philosophers; as a party of agitation, too small to come, except in very rare instances, within sight of power, it has never, like the European parties, been obliged to formulate a technique or any but the meagrest sort of creed. Beyond the simple fact of the class-war Debs in this book, for example, does not appear to have gone: of the complex problems of the economic life, administration, education, international psychology there is hardly a hint; there is hardly a reflection even on the significance of socialism itself. The whole atmosphere is that of a primitive and, it must be added, a rather stale Marxism, and we are driven to realize that in this, as in so many other aspects of our cultural life, we are half a century behind Europe. "The labour movement in this country," said Randolph Bourne, "needs a philosophy, a literature, a constructive socialist analysis and criticism of industrial relations. Labour will scarcely do this thinking for itself. Unless middle-class radicalism threshes out its categories and interpretations and undertakes this constructive thought it will not be done." A comment that might well have been written of this very book.

Of this peculiarly American socialism Debs is indeed, as we can see, the incarnation: one cannot imagine a mind more unlike that of the typical European socialist. The complexity of a Bertrand Russell, the intellectual intensity of a Liebknecht, the administrative genius of a Lenin, the poetic vision, the catholic understanding of a Morris or a Jaurès, seem very remote from the simple, kindly, generous but rather provincial spirit revealed in

these pages. Debs is an authentic product of the mid-Western American tradition and, although both his parents were Alsations, he has all the traits of the Hoosier bred in the bone. His spiritual heritage, meanwhile, is the heritage of Patrick Henry, Paine, Garrison, Wendell Phillips and Robert Ingersoll; he is a liberator, pure and simple, in the direct line of descent from the revolutionists of the eighteenth century and the abolitionists of the nineteenth; and it is characteristic of this tradition that he has little to say in the sphere of constructive suggestion. A practical organizer, a natural man of action, a magnetic leader, he is true to type in having, as a boy and a young man, paid more attention to the study of oratory than to any other subject. Many a "flower of speech" worthy of a southern congressman blossoms in Mr. Karsner's pages. One of Debs' first writings was a paper on "The Secret of Efficient Expression."

If Mr. Karsner's story is almost exclusively one of simple action, a record of strikes, of labour organization, of trials and imprisonments, and the subject does not lend itself to a complex analysis, one gains from it at least, aside from the documentary material that gives it great value from a historical point of view, a very definite sense of the charm and beauty of Debs' character. "In the just verdict of mankind," says Mr. Karsner, "the world will agree that Debs was honest, kind, sincere, loyal, devoted, true, lovable and loving." This character, in its gentleness and generosity, its absolute disinterestedness, its simple dignity, is one of the brightest feathers in the cap of the proletarian movement. "God was feeling mighty good when he made 'Gene Debs,'" said James Whitcomb Riley, "and he didn't have anything else to do all day." That reflects the general testimony of two generations.

V. W. B.

A REVIEWER'S NOTE-BOOK.

WHAT is the significance in our social history of the figure of Buffalo Bill? His career as an actor, as the personification of the Wild West, began just at the moment when the West itself had passed from the primitive to the industrial stage; when our society had become an urban society and the old, adventurous life of the plains had ceased to afford in fact an outlet for so many of the unassimilable instincts of American youth. It was then that the drama of the cowboy arose, the drama that still flourishes in the motion picture, with its infinite simplification of the human scene, offering through the imagination a release from the restraints and the maladjustments and the enforced uniformity of the commercial life. Buffalo Bill was the ideal plainsman. A big-hearted boy, as beautiful as Achilles, he was the captain of his type. And when, perhaps through the example of Barnum, he conceived the idea of the Wild West Show, he was already a legendary hero.

Nor much of the psychology of his rise and position emerges from Mrs. Cody's "Memories of Buffalo Bill" (Appleton). It is not the showman that we see in these pages, but the scout and the hunter of earlier days. We do, for all that, observe how innate in him was the temperament of the actor. He was always the creator of sensations; he had always a hunger for effect. Mrs. Cody objected at first when he appeared once, after an absence, with the long hair and the extravagant goatee that expressed his wish to be different: she was amused and amazed when he insisted upon costuming himself for a horse-race in a jockey suit of red flannel of so glaring a hue that it attracted a band of prowling Indians and turned the race into a battle; her nervous system suffered many a shock from a theatricality that made him, for example, on one occasion, when they were being pursued by Indians, hold the muzzle of his revolver against her forehead, rehearsing how he was going to save her from a fate worse than death. And once, when she was already ill and he was on the war-path, he sent

¹ "Debs: His Authorized Life and Letters," by David Karsner. New York, Boni and Liveright.

her a box that contained, as the first news of him in weeks and weeks, the reeking, rotting scalp of an Indian victim. He was an actor; he had to show off: in him, in the contact of East and West, the cowboy had lost his unconsciousness. But Buffalo Bill could not adjust himself to the ordinary stage. Most amusing are the stories Mrs. Cody tells of his misery and disgust in the raw melodramas in which he first appeared before the Eastern public. The Wild West Show was simply a microcosm of his natural life: he had invented a semi-artistic form in which his instincts were called into full play. Perhaps it was the nearest approach we have had to an indigenous American drama.

It all happened before the war in A. Herbage Edwards' "Paris Through an Attic" (Dutton) and since then the interest of Paris itself has been almost killed with literary kindness. Of eternal pertinence, on the other hand, is the story of a pair of lovers who contrive to live, work and be merry on \$350 a year. "Richard" and the writer were married on just that, they went off to study at the Sorbonne, they made a brilliant success of it. The book describes their student life and the infinite resources that Paris yielded up to them. But what gives it a real fascination is the account of that miraculous domestic economy, which fills a hundred pages or more and is explained in the minutest detail: how the flat was fitted up, how the work was done and how the marketing, the menus, etc. An air of the most exquisite happiness disengages itself from these statistics, which proves how much of the real wisdom of life there is behind them. One might recommend the book to reckless lovers even in New York.

A FEW years from now it is likely that "Picture-Show" (Dutton) will appear as a moment of transition in Siegfried Sassoon's literary life. In these poems the war seems to come back from a certain distance, in stabs and flashes of an ironic nightmare, to a mind already recomposing itself in a saner air. Very few of the poems, in fact, save those that were actually written before the armistice—poems, two or three of them, of a terrible intensity, tragic and satiric, recall the war at all. A new Sassoon is revealed in pieces like "Wraiths":

They know not the green leaves;
In whose earth-haunting dream
Dimly the forest heaves,
And voiceless goes the stream.
Strangely they seek a place
In love's night-memorial hall;
Peering from face to face,
Until some heart shall call
And keep them, for a breath,
Half-mortal . . . (*Hark to the rain!*) . . .
They are dead . . . (*O hear how death
Gropes on the shutter'd pane!*)

Of novels of the war there have been three kinds. There are those that have dealt with masses and those that have dealt with types: of those that have really pictured individuals there have been scarcely half a dozen. Among these was "Men in War"; among them is Andreas Latzko's latest novel, "The Judgment of Peace" (Boni and Liveright). Latzko is one of those rare spirits who are able to sustain the mood of pity and illumination that visits other minds only in flashes, and the central episode of this book, the night in the dugout and the inner struggle of George Gadsby and the effect of the anticipation of attack upon each member of the group who have exchanged their views in the earlier pages, is certainly one of the great moments of contemporary literature. All the principal characters are artists and idealists; Gadsby himself is a great pianist who has volunteered: all are trampled under foot by Sergeant Stuff, all are broken and destroyed—but not before they have said their say. Bitter, beautiful, ironical, terrible in its vision and its

protest, this book is, above all, of a vibrant sanity. It is probably the best picture we have had of the irreconcilable elements in Germany during the war.

If the labour movement in this country is relatively backward and stagnant it is largely because the intellectual class has not yet effectively joined hands with it. If the intellectual class is still, outside strictly professional lines, so undeveloped and so amateurish it is largely because, having fallen out of touch with tradition, it has no abiding, fortifying sense of its function in society. In England splendid results have followed from the alliance of the thinkers and the workers, and everything points toward a similar approaching union here. It is to prepare the artists and the scientists to join the American proletariat as a community of producers in the reconstruction of society that Herbert E. Cory has written "The Intellectuals and the Wage Workers" (The Sunwise Turn, New York). Mr. Cory identifies the intellectuals and the workers in his definition of the proletariat as that class "which has become earnestly self-conscious and sustainedly active in the fulfillment of a purpose which is nothing less than a fundamental and world-wide reconstructive movement." He then applies the Freudian technique to an analysis of society itself, showing that while the hope of equality is, in fact, justified by contemporary science, the institutions that stand in the way of its realization are "hysterical symptoms, compromises, bad habit-formations—from competitive random activities, morbid complexes and inertia." His further aim is to suggest how, after the rational breakdown of these institutions, we may "so integrate our activities as to get a much fuller release for that wish to love, we may discover our autonomy and seek free identification, thus expressing what we believe to be the original nature of man." There is no doubt whatever of the suggestive value of Mr. Cory's book. If not as a total argument, for the argument is, in fact, rather loosely conducted, at least in many a long passage and in the mass of quotations it assembles from contemporary thinkers, it is full of light and warmth. It would have gone far if it had merely successfully posed its problem. Why doesn't Mr. Cory follow up this book with another, a psychoanalysis of the American intellectual? Having shown him his opportunity, Mr. Cory should also show him how he can take advantage of it.

MR. GRANT OVERTON is a shining example of the *entente* between the Puritan and the commercial spirit. His pages are full of morality and full of money, and on these two pillars he erects a whole philosophy of literary criticism. "Why Authors Go Wrong" (Moffat, Yard) is his theme, and as almost every author in America manifestly does go wrong no theme could deserve a devouter scrutiny. How does Mr. Overton handle it? One can best suggest his method by quoting his definition of going right: "Every man must before beginning work fix his mind intently upon the making of money, the money which shall be an evidence of his mastery; every man on beginning work and for the duration of the work must fix his mind intently and exclusively on the service of morality, the great master whose slave he is in the execution of an Invisible Purpose." The idea of literature as the expression of an internal process Mr. Overton seems never to have conceived; for the rest, despite the solemnity of the sentence I have quoted, he strikes one as a sort of Arrow Collar young man in criticism: he is brisk, very knowing in matters of the trade, a great reader of advertisements, a ready compiler of lists, with a memory six months deep, a horizon bounded by the publishers' catalogues, and a patter worthy of an automobile salesman. Mr. Overton belongs to a school of fresh-water Chestertons who have lately invaded New York; but, although in appearance of a type alarmingly new, they are actually of the oldest metropolitan strain. They are all the literary grandchildren of N. P. Willis.

Epimenides was sent by his father into the field to look for a sheep, turned out of the road at mid-day and lay down in a certain cave and fell asleep, and slept there fifty-seven years; and after that, when awake, he went on looking for the sheep, thinking that he had been taking a short nap.

Epimenides does not read THE FREEMAN. He is loyal to the views that his father held when he first went in search of the sheep. We sent him a sample copy and a subscription blank, but he returned them writing:

Dear Sirs,
What was good enough for my father is good enough for me. He did not read THE FREEMAN, neither will I.
Yours faithfully,
Epimenides.

Is there an Epimenides among your friends who needs stirring up? We would like to send him a sample of THE FREEMAN even though he may return it.

A FRIEND who compliments us on the first four issues of THE FREEMAN adds: "Money still talks, so I enclose \$5.00 to extend my ten-weeks' subscription to one year."

Typical of many subscribers is the one who writes us from Moorhead, Minn.: "Begin with the first issue as I fancy I shall want a complete file." We are sorry to say that at present we have no copies of Nos. 1, 2 and 3. We are trying to secure some, but pending the result of our efforts, new subscriptions must begin with the current number or, if desired, with No. 4 (April 7).

THE FREEMAN will always keep open house to new ideas and, similarly, it will seek to avoid crystallization as to form and subject-matter. We will not make changes or introduce features for the sake of startling readers, but because we object to anything that is fixed and rigid. As one intelligent Chicago commentator observes in discussing our editorial, In the Vein of Intimacy: "The statement is not the delimitation of a hard-and-fast, iron-bound, rock-ribbed, static position. It is the indicating of an attitude. It implies development. It announces an expectation of growth, change. THE FREEMAN's position evidently may be likened to a moving equilibrium which may change with variation in the factors involved and yet remain none the less an equilibrium. Unity of spirit in diversity of functional manifestation."

This brings us to the pleasant announcement that we will, now and then, publish short stories. In early issues GRANVILLE BARKER and J. D. BERESFORD will be represented. Need we say more?

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